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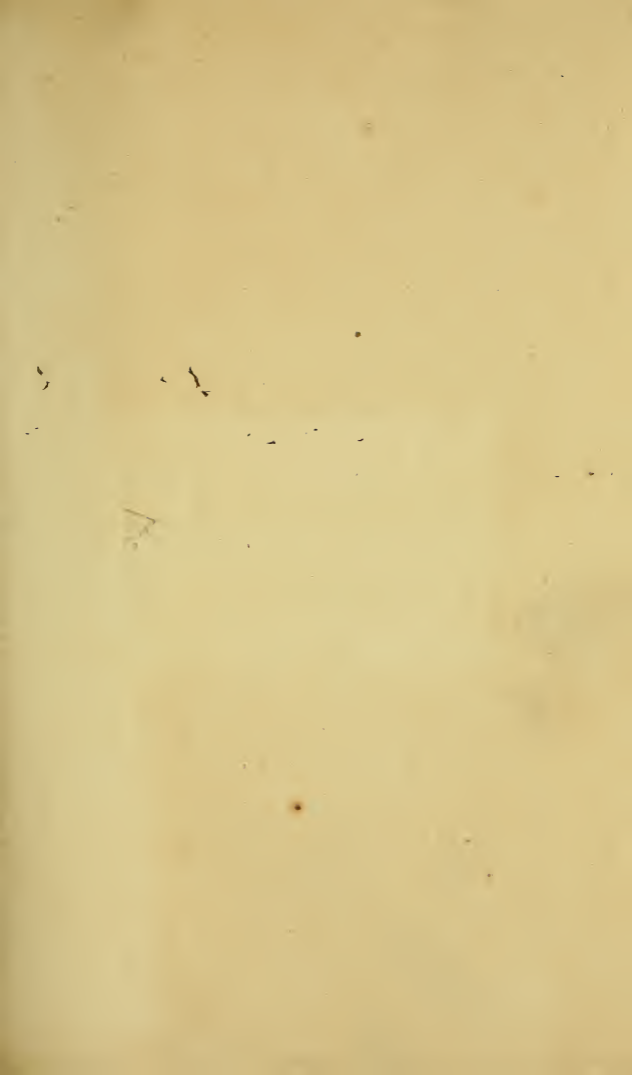
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CONTEMPLATIONS OF THE SAVIOUR;

A

249
Vol. 8th

SERIES OF EXTRACTS

FROM THE

G O S P E L H I S T O R Y ,

WITH

R E F L E C T I O N S ,

AND

O R I G I N A L A N D S E L E C T E D

H Y M N S .

BY S. GREENLEAF BULFINCH.



BOSTON:
CARTER AND HENDEE.
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PREFACE.

THE following pages have been prepared with reference chiefly to the purposes of family devotion. Many who have been called on to conduct the religious services of a domestic circle, must have felt the difficulty of selecting, in every instance, such passages of Scripture as would be fitted for the purpose intended, by their freedom from obscurity, their unity of subject, and their natural application to the duties of ordinary life. And as the exercise of reading is commonly followed by a prayer, or in some instances by a hymn entirely unconnected in subject with the scriptural lesson, there is danger that the religious exercises should, at their close, leave but a vague and confused impression.

It has been thought that these evils might be remedied, by presenting passages from Scripture of moderate length; with Reflections and Hymns, which, following the course of thought suggested by the extracts which they accompany, may serve to deepen their impression on the memory, the understanding, and the feelings. The aim of the reflections has not been to advance new or striking thoughts, but merely to follow out the most useful ideas presented in the Scriptural extracts: these must for the most part be such as would occur to every mind. Little originality therefore can be expected. Of the hymns, twenty-two are selected from various authors; the rest are original.

The selections from the New Testament present, in a connected series, the events of our Saviour's life. That these should be viewed as constituting a whole, and a clear idea gained of the order in which they succeeded one

another, is an object of no small importance, and of some difficulty. That the historical incidents might be exhibited in a connected view, it has been necessary to omit those discourses of our Lord which were not connected with any leading event of his ministry. The system of arrangement adopted by Dr. Carpenter and Professor Palfrey has been observed; and the edition, by the latter gentleman, of the New Testament conformed to the text of Griesbach, has been followed in the Scriptural extracts. In a very few instances, the liberty has been taken of condensing the text by the omission of verses or words, where it was thought that a judicious reader in a family circle would have felt himself authorized to do the same.

It is hoped that the following pages may afford assistance, not only in family worship, but in private meditation; and by the arrangement which they present of the events in the life of Jesus, may not be without their use in aiding the labours of the Sunday School Teacher.

S. G. B.

Boston, April, 1832.

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THE
G O S P E L H I S T O R Y.

P A R T I.

E V E N T S P R E C E D I N G T H E M I N I S T R Y O F J E S U S.

S E C T I O N I.

T H E A N N U N C I A T I O N.

L U K E I. 26.

AND in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David ; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured ; the Lord is with thee ; blessed art thou among women. And she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with God ; and behold thou shalt bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest ; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David ; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever ; and of his kingdom there

shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born, shall be called the Son of God. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

REFLECTIONS.

“Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.” The reply of Mary expresses her undoubting faith. That she should place full reliance upon such a divine communication, appears to us by no means extraordinary. But there are subjects on which we, like her, are instructed from above; and on these how often do we doubt! How often do we overlook the seal of heavenly truth with which God has sanctioned his revelations! We are, we say, fully convinced that Jesus was the messenger of God; but do we always receive his commands with implicit faith? He has unveiled to us the world to come: we hear his denunciations to the impenitent, his invitations to all; but while we listen, is there not a feeling of doubt within us; a reluctance to take his promises for the ground of our hopes? He has declared that our heavenly Father governs the universe he made, and that without him not a sparrow falleth to the ground. Do we believe this? If so, we must be happy; for in such faith we shall find a peace which nothing else can yield us. But by how few among us is this holy faith possessed without a cloud of doubt! When we are convinced that our Saviour spoke by authority from on high, doubt and fear should no longer have place, but all his declarations meet the same ready and humble faith which would be yielded to the words of a visibly present angel.

HYMN.

THE MESSENGERS OF GOD.

Thy messengers, Eternal God,
Are seen in earth and air ;
They spread thy glory far abroad,
Thy boundless might declare.

The thunders roll, the lightnings fly,
Thy mandates to perform ;
Thy name is written on the sky,
'T is spoken in the storm.

But other messengers are thine,
Children of light and love ;
To do on earth thy will divine,
Or waft our prayers above.

And in thy word a voice we hear
Of promised rest on high.
It bids us to thy throne draw near
And on thy strength rely.

O may that faith which Mary knew
Our inmost hearts possess,
That we may feel thy promise true,
And trust thy care to bless !



SECTION II.

BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

LUKE I. 57.

Now Elizabeth's full time came that she should be delivered ; and she brought forth a son. And her neighbors and her cousins heard how the Lord had showed

great mercy upon her ; and they rejoiced with her. And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child ; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. And his mother answered and said, Not so ; but he shall be called John. And they said unto her, there is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all. And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed ; and he spake, and praised God. And fear came on all that dwelt round about them ; and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judea. And all that heard them, laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be ? And the hand of the Lord was with him. And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people ; and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us, in the house of his servant David ; (as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began;) that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us ; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant, the oath which he sware to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all our days. And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest ; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways ; to give

knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.—And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts, till the day of his showing unto Israel.

REFLECTIONS.

What holy gratitude does Zacharias express, in his thanksgiving at the close of this chapter. The light from heaven which had long been veiled, was now about to burst forth again; and the venerable man knew, that the child of his old age was to be the favoured medium of the divine communications. What joy must have swelled the father's heart, as he thought of the future holiness and eminence of the infant before him. Can we not imagine him, with the fire of inspiration, and the smile of paternal love, together lighting up his venerable features, as he pronounces the words, "And thou, child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest, for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways?" There is not a higher earthly enjoyment than good parent derives from the virtue of his child. What an incitement does this afford to a grateful son, to render his growing virtues a crown of joy to the grey hairs of those who gave him life!

But the joy of Zacharias was not for himself alone. "The day-spring from on high" had dawned. Its rays preceded a more glorious light, "the Sun of Righteousness," and Christians now, rejoicing in its full radiance, may well praise the Father of lights, from whom cometh every good, and every perfect gift.

HYMN.

“THE DAY-SPRING FROM ON HIGH.”

Toiling through the livelong night,
Faint, uncertain of his way,
How the traveller hails the light,
Herald of the coming day.

Thus, when fraud and rapine threw
O'er the world their cloud afar,
On the good man's raptured view
Broke the dawn of Judah's star.

Tears of joy and gratitude
Hailed the Baptist's natal morn,
For the heavenly light renewed,
For another prophet born.

Born to go before the face
Of Judea's Saviour king;
Tidings of celestial grace
To the mourning land to bring.

Thus began the song of praise
For the day-spring's earliest ray.
How should we the anthem raise
For the Gospel's perfect day!



SECTION III.

BIRTH OF JESUS.

LUKE II. 1.

AND it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made, when

Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the house and lineage of David,) to be taxed with Mary, his espoused wife. And she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds, abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace; good will towards men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it, wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these

things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

REFLECTIONS.

The records of nations cannot furnish a parallel in importance to the event here recorded. Many a Pharisee, many a man of eminence, among the crowd who now filled Bethlehem, passed thoughtlessly by the humble resting place, which yielded its poor accommodations to Mary and her infant. In after days too, many a ruler of the people would have felt himself dishonoured by a comparison with Jesus. But what is earthly power or wealth, in the sight of God? The multitude who then thronged Bethlehem have passed away, and their names have no longer an existence in the memory of man; nor would a vestige remain to prove that they had once assembled, but for the connexion of the incident with the birth of that child. And of those crowds who turned superciliously away from the instructions of Jesus, the remembrance has passed from the earth. Their very denominations of Pharisee and Sadducee, are famous only from their incidental occurrence in the history of the man of Nazareth. Oh Thou who seest not as man seeth, teach us to use candor and deliberation, when we judge from outward appearances! Teach us cheerfully to dispense, if need be, with the luxuries of life, and never to pride ourselves on their possession; remembering that Jesus, our holy Master, was born in the humble manger of an inn; remembering that he, whose name Thou hast exalted above every name, had scarcely, even in the hour of tenderest infancy, "where to lay his head!"

HYMN.

MILTON, (altered by Dr. Gardiner.)

No war or battle's sound
 Was heard the world around,
 No hostile chiefs to furious combat ran ;
 But peaceful was the night
 In which the Prince of light
 His reign of peace upon the earth began.

The shepherds on the lawn,
 Before the point of dawn,
 In social circle sat, while all around
 The gentle fleecy brood
 Or cropped the flowery food,
 Or slept, or sported on the verdant ground.

When lo ! with ravished ears,
 Each swain delighted hears
 Sweet music, offspring of no mortal hand ;
 Divinely warbled voice,
 Answering the stringed noise,
 With blissful rapture charmed the listening band.

They saw a glorious light
 Burst on their wond'ring sight.
 Harping in solemn choir, in robes arrayed,
 The helmed cherubim,
 And sworded seraphim
 Are seen in glitt'ring ranks, with wings displayed.

Sounds of so sweet a tone
 Before were never known,
 But when of old the sons of morning sung,
 While God disposed in air
 Each constellation fair,
 And the well balanced world on hinges hung.

“ Hail, hail, auspicious morn !
The Saviour Christ is born,”

(Such was the immortal seraph's song sublime,)

“ Glory to God in heaven !
To man sweet peace be given,
Sweet peace and friendship to the end of time !”



SECTION IV.

PRESENTATION OF JESUS IN THE TEMPLE.

LUKE II. 22.

AND they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord, and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons. And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon ; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel. And the Holy Ghost was upon him ; and it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple ; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law ; then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word ; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people ; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. And his father and mother marveled at those things which were spoken of him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set

for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against ; (yea a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also ;) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser : she was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years ; and she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she, coming in that instant, gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

REFLECTIONS.

“Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace !” Excellent old man ! Were we asked the cause of our unwillingness to die, how various would be the reasons assigned. We are not prepared ;—we have not we think, enjoyed the fullness of this world’s blessings ;—we fear ;—and a cloud of doubt, which even our christian belief does not entirely dispel, comes between us and the light of immortality. With Simeon it was not so. He waited but for one blessing more ;—to see the consolation of Israel ; and his wish was granted. His cup of joy was full ; the Saviour had come ; the “light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel” had appeared ; and now the old man looked to God in perfect, fearless confidence, ready to depart in peace, to pass quietly from the anticipation to the full enjoyment of heaven. How happy is the death of him who is alike the friend of God and man ! He looks round on earth, and sees Almighty goodness employed in promoting those best interests of his

race which have ever been dear to him; he looks up to Heaven, and there a Father's love is ready to bid him welcome. He closes his eyes, and enters peacefully on the "inheritance of the Saints in light."

HYMN.

MERRICK.

'T is enough—the hour is come;
 Now within the silent tomb
 Let this mortal frame decay,
 Mingled with its kindred clay;
 Since thy mercies, oft' of old
 By thy chosen seers foretold,
 Faithful now, and stedfast prove,
 God of truth, and God of love!

Since at length my aged eye
 Sees the day-spring from on high,
 Those whom death has overspread
 With his dark and dreary shade,
 Lift their eyes, and, from afar,
 Hail the light of Jacob's star;
 Waiting till the promised ray
 Turn their darkness into day.

Sun of Righteousness, to Thee,
 Lo! the nations bow the knee;
 And the realms of distant kings
 Own the healing of thy wings:
 See the beams intensely shed,
 Shine on Zion's favored head!
 Never may they hence remove,
 God of truth, and God of love!

SECTION V.

FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.

MATT. II.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and lo, the star which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshipped him; and when they had open-

ed their treasures, they presented unto him gifts ; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream, that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word ; for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt ; and was there until the death of Herod ; that it might be fulfilled that which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

REFLECTIONS.

The Almighty operates by human means. The life of Jesus was precious in his sight, and he would not abandon it to the murderous attempts of Herod : yet did he use the ordinary instruments for its preservation. Joseph must arise at midnight, and undertake a long and toilsome journey, that Jesus may be rescued. This should teach us, that the care of life and health is a duty with which we may not dispense. It is not enough to say that we leave these things in the hand of Providence. Providence has committed them to us, and we may not resign our trust.

But the flight into Egypt, though it tore from their home the husband and his recently wedded wife, and exposed them to toil and danger, had its consolations. They knew that the life of their child was dear to God ; that his guardian care protected their way ; and that, since he was near them, there was no cause for fear. Such is the faith of the Christian. He adopts indeed those measures which a wise prudence dictates for his own happiness and that of others ; but he ever

feels, that in the use of these means he is surrounded and upheld by the Providence of God ; that his heavenly Father beholds him in love, and will order all things, even those which may wear the aspect of calamity, for his final good.

HYMN.

MRS. HEMANS.

Oh ! lovely voices of the sky
 Which hymn'd the Saviour's birth,
 Are ye not singing still on high,
 Ye that sang, " Peace on earth ? "
 To us yet speak the strains,
 Wherewith, in time gone by,
 Ye blessed the Syrian swains,
 Oh ! voices of the sky.

Oh ! clear and shining light, whose beams
 That hour heaven's glory shed,
 Around the palms, and o'er the streams,
 And on the shepherd's head ;
 Be near, through life and death,
 As in that holiest night
 Of hope, and joy, and faith :
 Oh ! clear and shining light.

Oh ! star which led to Him, whose love
 Brought down man's ransom free,
 Where art thou ?—'midst the host above,
 May we still gaze on thee ?
 In heaven thou art not set,
 Thy rays earth may not dim ;
 Send them to guide us yet,
 Oh ! star which led to Him.

SECTION VI.

VISIT TO THE TEMPLE.

LUKE II. 40.

AND the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom ; and the grace of God was upon him. Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem, after the custom of the feast ; and when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem ; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey ; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance : and when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him. And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions ; and all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed ; and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us ? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, how is it that ye sought me ? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business ? And they understood not the sayings which he spake unto them. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth ; and was subject unto them : but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

REFLECTIONS.

What is there in this account most worthy of our attention, of our love? Is it the early understanding of Jesus, which astonished the elders with whom he spoke? No. Others have given proof in youth, of wonderful intellect, but united to a defective character. Thus was it not with Jesus. He sat among the doctors in the temple, not from vanity, to exhibit to their admiration his youthful powers, but because he loved the subjects on which they spoke, he loved to converse of God, and of his holy law. It is this, his devotion to his heavenly Friend and Father, which gives such a charm to this incident of his childhood. It is indeed, "the beauty of holiness." If Jesus had been found in conversation on earthly subjects, displaying the same understanding, to the astonishment of those who heard him, we must have admired, but we should not have loved him as we do now. And what we love, we should imitate, giving up our hearts to God, whether we be young or old. Happy, thrice happy are they, who, like their Saviour, love God and holiness from their youth; for they will have the love of all who know them, here below, and of a better friend, even God himself, their Father, in heaven.

HYMN.

SALISBURY COLLECTION.

In the soft season of thy youth,
In nature's smiling bloom,
Ere age arrive, and trembling wait
Its summons to the tomb;

Remember thy Creator, God;
For him thy powers employ,
Make him thy fear, thy love, thy hope,
Thy confidence, thy joy.

He shall defend and guide thy course
Through life's uncertain sea,
Till thou art landed on the shore
Of blest eternity.

Then seek the Lord betimes, and choose
The path of heavenly truth :
The earth affords no lovelier sight
Than a religious youth.

PART II.

TO JESUS' FIRST MIRACLE

SECTION VII.

BAPTISM OF JESUS.

MATT. III.

IN those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan; and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruit meet for repentance; and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree

which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance ; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear : he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire : whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and he will gather his wheat into the garner ; but burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me ? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now ; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water ; and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him : and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

REFLECTIONS.

What a comment does this account afford us, on the emptiness of our excuses for neglecting the ordinances of religion ! We think, perhaps, that we stand in no need of them : we suppose our principles too firmly fixed to receive aid from the ministrations of a fellow mortal in public worship. Or we are over fearful of appearing ostentatious in our goodness. We fear lest the world should suspect us of a desire to appear holier than others. How many, from feelings like these, refrain from approaching the table of Christian communion ! How many, by such thoughts, are withheld from engaging in family worship, from regular attendance on the public service of God, nay even from private prayer !

Such thoughts derive no sanction from the example of Jesus. Wherever an opportunity presented itself of leaving his testimony to the cause of holiness, of acknowledging his God, of instructing those around him, that opportunity he improved. Does not his example speak to each of us, in his own words, "Go, and do thou likewise?"

HYMN.

"SUFFER IT TO BE SO NOW; FOR THUS IT BECOMETH US TO FULFIL ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS."

And shall I, of my strength secure,
Resist instruction's call,
When thou, the holy and the pure,
Didst condescend to all?

Oh let me meekly serve my God,
Nor think his service shame;
And tread the path my Saviour trod,
And fearless, own his name.

Unmoved, if mortals blame or praise,
My Maker's will perform;
His love, my joy in prosperous days,
My shelter in the storm.

SECTION VIII.

TEMPTATION IN THE WILDERNESS.

MATT. IV.

THEN was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterwards an hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he

said, If thou be the son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple; and saith unto him, If thou be the son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

REFLECTIONS.

“All these things will I give thee.” Such is ever the call of temptation. “All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship thy passions, if thou wilt sacrifice what is noble in thee to what is base, philanthropy and religion to selfish enjoyment, the future to the present, heaven to earth.” Let us flee from idolatry. The moment when inclination becomes sufficiently strong within us to banish from our minds the thought of God, and make duty seem unattractive, that moment we are in danger. That moment we may be sure that an idol has erected an altar in our hearts. Let us at that moment resolve never more to worship before

it. All those things for which we ask, it may give us or it may withhold; but it will rob us of our peace of mind, our social and religious feelings, the rational esteem of the wise and virtuous, the approbation of our conscience and of our God.

HYMN.

“THOU SHALT WORSHIP THE LORD THY GOD, AND HIM ONLY SHALT THOU SERVE.”

When a thousand voices raise
To thy name the shout of praise,
And before thy dazzled sight
Glory beams enthroned in light,
While on thee she calls aloud,
Pointing to the admiring crowd,
Pause, nor kneel before her throne;
Give thy heart to God alone!

Sweeter strains of soft desire
Float round Pleasure's golden lyre.
Bright as beams of opening day
Hope and Transport round her play;
Smiles and Gaiety are there,
Banished far are Thought and Care.
Heed not thou the entrancing tone:
Give thy heart to God alone.

Mammon bids thee view the store
Heaped for him from every shore.
Worship him, and wealth untold,
Through thy swelling coffers rolled,
Shall reward thy bended knee.
Spurn the base idolatry!
Heavenly treasures are thine own:
Give thy heart to God alone.

Onward, in thy Saviour's path,
 Brave the baffled Tempter's wrath.
 Soon deceitful Pleasure's lay
 From thine ear shall sink away;
 Soon Ambition's thrilling voice
 Cease to urge thy trembling choice.
 Life's short day of duty done,
 Thou shalt joy in God alone.

SECTION IX.

CALL OF NATHANAEL, AND OTHERS.

JOHN I. 35.

AGAIN, the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) Where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day. It was about the tenth hour. One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias; (which is, being interpreted, the Christ.) And he brought him to Jesus. When Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, a stone. The day following, he would go forth into Galilee; and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow

me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and said unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

REFLECTIONS.

“Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?” Mistaken man! Why should you thus brand a whole city with unworthiness? Why be slow to place confidence in the merit of any portion of your race? Yet how often do we fall into the same error! If we have found anything blameable in the character of a few individuals, we ascribe the same defect to their whole class, or sect, or nation: and should any of those we have thus condemned, afford proof of excellence, how ready are we to exclaim, in incredulous surprise, “Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?” Rather should we rejoice to see what is good everywhere, and con-

sider ourselves happy when we are able to think better than before, of a man or a class of men.

But the error of Nathanael was not that of a perverted heart. Open and sincere, and exhibiting this sincerity in the very avowal of his prejudice, he was "an Israelite indeed," a worthy descendent of Abraham, "the father of the faithful." The Saviour not only forgives his hasty judgment, but greets him with marked benignity. Thus will the true disciple of Jesus forgive the prejudice with which others, through ignorance, may regard him; and honor and love them for those excellences which he observes in their character, though they fail to appreciate the merits of his own.

HYMN.

PREJUDICE.

Oh, darkly on the path of life
 The pilgrim holds his course of strife;
 His wandering vision strives in vain
 The distant prospect to attain;
 And Prejudice will rise between
 And doubt's dark clouds enfold the scene.

Father of lights! to Thee we pray
 To chase those clouds of doubt away,
 Bid lingering Prejudice depart
 That long has shadowed o'er the heart,
 And cause thy Truth, with ray divine,
 Upon thy servant's path to shine.

Thus when thy Sun in glory springs,
 With morning on his golden wings,
 The shades retire, the mists of night
 Recede, and Nature smiles in light,
 And hill and vale, and earth and sea,
 Breathe forth their matin song to Thee.

SECTION X.

MARRIAGE IN CANA.

JOHN II.

AND the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee ; and the mother of Jesus was there. And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee ? Mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. And there were set there six water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast ; and they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, (and knew not whence it was, but the servants which drew the water knew,) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine ; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse ; but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory, and his disciples believed on him. After this, he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples, and they continued there not many days.

REFLECTIONS.

Benevolent Saviour! pleased to behold the innocent pleasures of the bridal circle, pleased to lend the sanction of thy presence to the holy tie which unites two kindred hearts! how has thy religion been misunderstood! True happiness and true piety are inseparable. The relations of social life, the affections of parent and child, of brothers and sisters, of friendship, of wedded love, all the gentler emotions, as they tend to develope what is amiable in us, tend to make us love and serve God better; and the love and the service of him lend a richer charm to the endearment of social intercourse. Friendship and affection are holy things. The truly religious heart must have room for these heavenly guests; and where these are, there, in greater or less strength, but ever unextinguished, is the principle of Religion. If there is a blessing, for which we ought to be grateful to God, it is for our friends. How desolate would life be without them! How kind is that *heavenly Friend* who hath granted them to us, and who beholds with an approving smile, the union of heart with heart among his happy children.

HYMN.

BISHOP HEBER.

Incarnate Word! who, wont to dwell
 In lowly shape and cottage cell,
 Didst not refuse a guest to be
 At Cana's poor festivity :

Oh when our soul from care is free,
 Then, Saviour, may we think on thee,
 And, seated at the festal board,
 In fancy's eye behold the Lord.

So may such joy, chastised and pure,
 Beyond the bounds of earth endure;
 Nor pleasure, in the wounded mind,
 Shall leave a rankling sting behind.

PART III.

TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF JESUS' PUBLIC MINISTRY IN GALILEE.



SECTION XI.

CONVERSATION WITH NICODEMUS.

JOHN II. 13, AND III.

AND the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And he found in the temple those that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money, sitting : and when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep and the oxen ; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables ; and said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence : make not my Father's house a house of merchandize.

There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. The same came to him by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God : for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can

a man be born when he is old ? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh ; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth : so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be ? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things ? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen ; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things ? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven.

REFLECTIONS.

Sects may differ in their speculative views of regeneration, but they agree far more nearly than many among their disputants imagine. Man, when left without religious impressions, is weak in character, subject to the influence of every passion ; with all his hopes and fears engaged within the narrow limits of this life ; selfish ; not applying himself with any steadiness of purpose to his own improvement ; living merely for the external world. The good seed of religion is sown in his mind, takes root and thrives there. The frailty of his character is changed to strength, and temptations formerly yielded to, are now resisted. The circle of his attention is no longer limited to earth, and to a short term of life here below ; it embraces heaven, and ex-

pands into eternity. Instead of living for himself alone, he now feels himself the brother and friend of mankind, and the child of God. The improvement of his own character becomes the chief object of his life; he lives in an internal, a spiritual world, conversant with things invisible. Has not such a man acquired a new life? Has he not indeed been "born again?" Thus may it appear, at the final day, that we have been "born of God!"

HYMN.

Sad is this narrow span,
This grant of fleeting years;
In tears our earthly course began,
And finishes in tears.

But, Father! thou hast given
A hope of rest on high;
Hast made the grave the path to heaven,
To immortality.

Children of thee, we own
A new and heavenly birth;
Kindred to spirits round thy throne,
Though sojourners of earth.

Born of thy Spirit, Lord,
Thy Spirit may we share;
Deep in our hearts inscribe thy word,
And place thine image there.

Teach us to walk aright
On earth, as serving thee;
Then take us to thy realms of light,
Thine to eternity.

SECTION XII.

WALK THROUGH THE CORNFIELDS.

LUKE VI.

AND it came to pass on the second Sabbath after the feast, that he went through the cornfields ; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands. And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath day ? And Jesus answering them, said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when himself was an hungered, and they which were with him ; how he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shew-bread, and gave also to them which were with him, which is not lawful to eat, but for the priests alone ? And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath. And it came to pass also on another Sabbath, that he entered into the Synagogue, and taught : and there was a man whose right hand was withered. And the Scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the Sabbath day ; that they might find an accusation against him. But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up and stand forth in the midst. And he arose, and stood forth. Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you, What is lawful on the Sabbath day ? To do good, or to do evil, to save life, or to kill ? And looking round about upon them all, he said unto him, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so : and his hand was restored whole as the other.

And they were filled with madness; and they communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

REFLECTIONS.

To pluck ears of corn, in passing through a field, was in itself a lawful action, sanctioned by Deut. xxiii. 25. It was objected to by the Pharisees only as a breach of the Sabbath. But our Saviour would guard his followers against superstition, even in their veneration for the day of God's appointment. We must not neglect the *means* of religion, the Sabbath and its ordinances, prayer, public and private, and the reading of the Scriptures. But we must not mistake all these for Religion itself. Religion is of the heart, and of the life; and its forms are only useful, as they produce it, or manifest its existence in the heart and life. Most wisely and graciously has God provided the Sabbath for our use; and that man knows or thinks but little of his own spiritual wants, who perverts it from its true purposes, to make it a day of business, or of pleasure. But it "was made for man." In itself, apart from considerations of our improvement, it is like other days. On every day, as on that, is God near us; on every day let him be worshipped; worshipped in secret prayer, in the family circle, in honesty in our dealings, in all holiness of word, and deed, and thought. Thus shall the worship of the days of toil prepare us for the worship of the day of rest.

HYMN.

Hail to the Sabbath day!
 The day divinely given,
 When men to God their homage pay,
 And earth draws near to heaven.

Lord, in thy sacred hour,
 Within thy courts we bend,
 And bless thy love, and own thy power,
 Our Father, and our Friend.

But thou art not, alone,
 In courts by mortals trod,
 Nor only is the day thine own,
 When men draw near their God.

Thy Temple is the arch
 Of yon unmeasured sky ;
 Thy Sabbath, the stupendous march
 Of grand eternity.

Lord ! may that holier day
 Dawn on thy servants' sight,
 And grant us in those courts to pray,
 Of pure, unclouded light.

SECTION XIII.

INTERVIEW WITH THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA.

JOHN IV.

WHEN therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) he left Judea, and departed again into Galilee. And he must needs go through Samaria. Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey sat thus on the well : and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water : Jesus saith unto her, give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, ask-

est drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? (For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans). Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with and the well is deep : from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water, shall thirst again : but whosoever drinketh of the water, that I shall give him, shall never thirst ; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.—The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain ; and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what : we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth ; for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit : and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Mesias cometh ; (which is called Christ ;) when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I, that speak unto thee, am he.

REFLECTIONS.

How constantly was our Saviour's life devoted to the good of his race! It was indeed, to use his own expression, "his meat to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish his work." In the present instance we see him wearied with a long journey on foot, seeking a few moments rest by the side of a well while his disciples leave him, to buy food that his exhausted strength and their own may be restored. This too is in a land with whose inhabitants his nation "have no dealings," even in the common civilities of life. Yet even here, in his exhaustion, and among strangers, he finds occasion to speak the words of God, to declare the spiritual nature of the divine kingdom, and his own commission from above. Let us, his disciples, learn from our Lord the value of time; and let it be our meat and drink, as it was his, to do the will of God, and promote the good of those around us.

How sublime too, how worthy of deep reflection, are the lessons he now taught; the value of his own instructions, that well of living water, springing up into everlasting life; and the spiritual character of God, and of that worship which He accepts. Let us worship Him in spirit; by prayer, not formal, but coming from our hearts; by constant endeavours to be holy, as He is holy; by the remembrance that the omnipresent Spirit is always near us; by the service of every action, and word, and thought.

HYMN.

REV. MR. PIERPONT.

Oh Thou, to whom, in ancient time
 The lyre of Hebrew bards was strung,
 Whom kings adored in song sublime,
 And Prophets praised with glowing tongue!

Not now on Zion's height alone
 Thy favoured worshippers may dwell,

Nor where, at sultry noon, thy Son
Sat, weary, by the patriarch's well.

From every place below the skies,
The grateful song, the fervent prayer,
The incense of the heart, may rise
To heaven, and find acceptance there.

To thee shall age, with snowy hair,
And strength and beauty bend the knee,
And childhood lisp, with reverent air,
Its praises and its prayers to thee.

Oh thou to whom in ancient time
The lyre of prophet bards was strung,
To thee at length, in every clime,
Shall temples rise, and praise be sung.



SECTION XIV.

CURE OF A NOBLEMAN'S SON.

JOHN IV. 43.

Now, after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee. For Jesus himself testified that a prophet hath no honour in his own country. Then, when he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast; for they also went unto the feast. So he came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down and heal his son;

for he was at the point of death. Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way, thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday, at the seventh hour, the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth; and himself believed, and his whole house. This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judea into Galilee.

REFLECTIONS.

“The man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him.” Few of those who surrounded Jesus would have been contented with so unostentatious a display of the Saviour’s power. They would have besought him to visit in person the chamber of the sick; they would have expected to witness the performance of solemn rites. But for this petitioner the sentence, “Thy son liveth,” was enough. Confiding humbly in the divine power, he yielded implicit belief to the words of Jesus. The example he affords is one which we can never directly imitate, for as the Saviour is no more on earth, performing miracles, the circumstances of his suppliant can never be ours. But the same implicit belief which filled his heart when Jesus spoke, may animate us, when we listen to the declarations of scripture, and when we look to Providence in the events of life. Our heavenly Father has promised us his protecting care: let us confide in that promise; and when, in the hour of distress, we rise

from prayer, let it be as the noblemen of Capernaum left the presence of Jesus, with undoubting faith that our supplication is heard and accepted, and that although the gift we ask may be denied, all needed blessings will be granted us, by the mercy of our heavenly Benefactor.

HYMN.

What power, unseen by mortal eye,
Wafted Messiah's high command,
Bade sickness from its victim fly,
And the glad friends believing stand ?

Father! 'T was thine. The Saviour spoke
The word confirmed by love divine ;
The bonds of fell disease he broke,
And, in his power, exalted thine.

Thy power, Oh Lord, is round us still,
Though shrouded from our feebler sight,
To guard, in danger's hour, from ill,
To lead us in the way of right.

Oh, if temptations paths we tread,
Still may we feel that thou art near ;
And in thy servants' bosom shed
The spirit of thy love and fear.

Then as of old, the hour which hears
Thy word, shall see that word obeyed ;
And rescued souls, with grateful tears
Shall bless thy Spirit's timely aid.

SECTION XV.

MIRACLE AT THE POOL OF BETHESDA.

JOHN V.

AFTER this there was a feast of the Jews ; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem, by the sheep market, a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great number of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water : whosoever then first after the troubling of the water, stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool : but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked. And on the same day was the Sabbath. The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the Sabbath day : it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed and walk? And he

that was healed wist not who it was, for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place. Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole : sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole. And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, because he had done these things on the Sabbath day.

REFLECTIONS.

Various accounts are given of the pool of Bethesda, and its efficacy as a means of cure. Whatever the explanation may be, is of little consequence to us, for the circumstance from which its interest is derived, is that our Saviour here performed a miracle. We may however observe that the expression, "an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water," may signify only, that at regular intervals, the healing power of the water returned, or was increased. But how useless was that healing power to the impotent man who now lay there! Day after day did he look for relief, and day after day was he disappointed. Thus how often, in the very hour when we expect happiness, an obstacle starts up before us, and our hope is turned to mourning!

But the Saviour came. The sick man heard his question without interest, for he knew not the power of him by whom it was proposed. A light arose where he looked not for it. Jesus healed by a word the disease under which he laboured. Thus amid our disappointments, does God open to us paths of happiness of which we had never thought. May we then moderate our expectations, cheerfully resign what our God denies, and gratefully take what his providence assigns us!

HYMN.

The aged sufferer waited long
Upon Bethesda's brink ;
Till hopes, once rising warm and strong,
Began in fears to sink.
And heavy were the sighs he drew,
And fervent was his prayer,
For he, with safety full in view,
Still languished helpless there.

His hope grew dim ; but one was nigh
Who saw the sufferer's grief.
That gentle voice, that pitying eye
Gave promise of relief.
Each pang that human weakness knows
Obeyed that powerful word :
He spake, and lo ! the sick arose,
Rejoicing in his Lord.

Father of Jesus, when oppressed
With grief and pain we lie,
And, longing for thy heavenly rest,
Despair to look so high,
Oh may the Saviour's words of peace
Within the wounded heart,
Bid every doubt and suffering cease,
And strength and joy impart.

SECTION XVI.

WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY.

JOHN VII. 1. 2. 14. VIII. 2.

AFTER these things Jesus walked in Galilee : for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him. Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him ; and he sat down, and taught them. And the Scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery ; and when they had set her in the midst, they say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned : but what sayest thou ? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So, when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last ; and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers ? hath no man condemned thee ? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus

said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee : go, and sin no more.

REFLECTIONS.

“He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her” Well would it be for the world, if the spirit of this sentence were more generally felt and acted on; if those who are themselves guilty would pass judgments of less unnecessary severity on their offending brethren. Let those laws which are established for the punishment of crime, be executed with all needed strictness; let those usages of society be retained and enforced, by which the abandoned are excluded from the society of those they might corrupt: but let mercy unite with justice in our judgments of our fellow men. At least, as individuals, let us be willing to think as favourably of all, as may be possible. Have not we ourselves offended? Should we not therefore, sympathize with others, even though guilty? If we be forgiving to them, we have the best hope of mercy from our God, for “the merciful shall obtain mercy.”

HYMN.

Benignant Saviour! 'T was not thine
To spurn the erring from thy sight,
Nor did thy smile of love divine
Turn from the penitent its light.

Oh then, shall we, who own thy name,
A brother's fault too sternly view,
Or think thy holy law can blame
The tear, to human frailty due?

May we, while human guilt awakes
Upon our cheek the generous glow,
Spare the offender's heart, that breaks
Beneath its load of shame and woe.

Conscious of frailty, may we yield
Forgiveness of the wrongs we bear ;
And strive the penitent to shield
From further sin, or dark despair.

And when our own offences weigh
Upon our heart, with anguish sore,
Lord, let thy sparing mercy say,
Like Jesus, "Go, and sin no more."

SECTION XVII.

CURE OF A BLIND MAN.

JOHN IX 1. AND 13.

AND as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind ? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents ; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day : the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay ; and said unto him, Go wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is, by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind. And it was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He

said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see. Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them. They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet. But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? How then doth he now see? His parents answered them and said, we know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: but by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age, ask him; he shall speak for himself. Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner. He answered and said, whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. They reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses; as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.

REFLECTIONS.

“For judgment,” said Jesus “I am come into this world; that they which see not, might see, and that they which see might be made blind;” nor could a more striking instance of intentional blindness have been exhibited, than in the conduct of the Pharisees on this occasion. The man who has

been restored to sight, stands before them. They have the testimony of his parents, as well as others, to the fact of his previous blindness, even from birth. But they shut their eyes against the conclusion; and fly to that resort, so common when reason fails, violence of words and conduct. And is there no voluntary blindness in us? When the book of God is within the reach of every one, while thousands are yet ignorant of what it requires, are they not voluntarily blind? Are we not chargeable with wilful blindness when painful but improving thoughts are in any manner elicited, and we turn impatiently away to some more pleasing subject; when we shake off the conviction that we are doing wrong, and continue in our conduct? Are we not voluntarily blind while a single foible remains undetected, of whose existence we should have been conscious, had we searched with sufficient care? May God open our eyes to our own defects, to the importance of amendment, to the glory and loveliness of his own perfect character!

HYMN.

IMPLORING DIVINE LIGHT. DR. JOHNSON.

Oh Thou whose power o'er moving worlds presides,
Whose voice created, and whose wisdom guides!
On darkling man in pure effulgence shine,
And cheer the clouded mind with light divine!

'Tis thine alone to calm the pious breast,
With silent confidence, and holy rest;
From thee, great God, we spring, to thee we tend,
Path, motive, guide, original, and end!

PART IV.

TO THE MISSION OF THE TWELVE.



SECTION XVIII.

JESUS AT NAZARETH.

LUKE IV. 14.

AND Jesus returned in the power of the spirit into Galilee : and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up : and, as his custom was on the Sabbath day, he went into the synagogue, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias ; and when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor ; he hath sent me to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind ; to set at liberty them that are bruised ; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all

bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son? And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian. And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath; and they rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill, whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he, passing through the midst of them, went his way; and he came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the Sabbath days.

REFLECTIONS.

How striking, how dignified, is the short address of Jesus, as he commences his preaching in his own city! But the inhabitants, though they admired at first, the gracious words of the Saviour, could not bear the high tone in which he spoke of his commission, and justified himself for not performing wonders among them. Pride prevented them from listening to his instructions,—mortified pride, in not having been themselves selected, as the witnesses of his previous miracles. How often does a similar pride deprive us of hap-

piness, when it stands ready for our acceptance! The thought that another is preferred to ourselves, that we, though favoured, are not sufficiently distinguished above others, such feelings make us unkind to our friends, ungrateful to our benefactors, and lead us to murmur against the providence of God.

The men of Nazareth, too, despised the Saviour for his poverty, and want of extraordinary advantages of education; for they knew not, that he had been taught from above, and that upon him had been poured forth the Spirit without measure. God often uses instruments, seemingly the most humble, to declare his will; and it is sometimes from the lowliest lips that we hear the divinest lessons of virtue, the wisest rules of happiness.

HYMN.

CHRISTIAN PSALMIST.

The race that long in darkness pined,
Have seen a glorious light;
The people dwell in day, who dwelt
In death's surrounding night.

To hail thy rise, thou better Sun!
The gathering nations come,
Joyous, as when the reapers bear
The harvest treasures home.

To us a child of hope is born,
To us a son is given;
Him shall the tribes of earth obey,
Him, all the hosts of heaven.

His name shall be the Prince of Peace,
Whose rule shall stretch abroad,
The Wonderful, the Counsellor,
The great and mighty Lord.

His power, increasing, still shall spread ;
His reign no end shall know ;
Justice shall guard his throne above,
And peace abound below.

SECTION XIX.

CALL OF PETER, AND OTHERS.

MATT. IV. 18.

AND JESUS, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea ; for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets ; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship, and their father, and followed him. And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria ; and they brought unto him all sick people, that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy ; and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan.

REFLECTIONS.

It appears from John i. 42. (Section ix.) that our Saviour had already conversed with Simon and Andrew, and conferred upon the former the name of Cephas, or Peter, signifying "a rock." He now summons them to quit their employments and follow him. The instruments of God in diffusing Christianity were humble men, and among them the distinguished apostle whose call is here recorded, pursued an unpretending occupation for his support. Yet was he chosen, while the proud, the wealthy, and the educated were passed by; and for what? For his sincerity, his boldness, the warmth of his affections, the faithfulness of his heart. These were treasures which the brightest acquirements of his nation's sages could not equal. Let the humble Christian strive after these treasures. Let him not envy the pageantry of kings, the fame of conquerors; for men, whose glory is more lasting than that of princes, were clothed in no costly robes, but those of justice and piety. And let not the child of fortune and cultivation look down with scorn on those whose station is inferior to his own; for they who taught the gospel to mankind, rose from obscurity; and never, in the exercise of their holy functions, wasted a thought of envy on the splendours of earth. Those splendours were too low and transient to be compared with the inheritance they looked for, incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away.

HYMN.

The wind was hushed on Galilee,
As near its waveless flood,
With thought as calm as that fair sea,
An humble fisher stood.

A voice was heard; as on the lake
Is heard the whispering breeze;
Gentle, yet mighty to awake
The grandeur of the seas.

Years passed away ;—the humble man
 Who stood unheeding there,
 No more at early dawn began
 The fisher's tranquil care.

Him, palaces of eastern pride
 Now hailed, an honoured guest ;
 And now, the lowliest couch beside,
 He spoke of heavenly rest.

He bore, through perils far and near
 His Saviour's holy name :
 He yielded not to hope or fear,
 To indolence or shame.

That Saviour's presence cheered his breast
 Through every varied scene :
 That faith his dying hour confessed,
 In martyrdom serene.

Lord ! while thy holy servant's lot
 In various scenes we view,
 Ne'er be that faith and love forgot,
 Which bore him stedfast through.



SECTION XX.

SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

MATT. v.

AND seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain ; and when he was set, his disciples came unto him : and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit ; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn ; for they shall

be comforted. Blessed are the meek ; for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness ; for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful ; for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart ; for they shall see God. Blessed are the peace-makers ; for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake ; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad ; for great is your reward in heaven ; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. Ye are the salt of the earth : but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted ? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick ; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

REFLECTIONS.

“ Blessed are the poor in spirit, the meek, the merciful.” It is not thus, we may suppose, that the world in general judge, for it is not on the principles thus expressed that they act. Yet are the words of our Saviour confirmed by daily experience. Who, even in this life, are happy, if not the peaceful ? Is violence of passion a blessing to him who indulges it ? Far otherwise. We cannot conceive of a state

of mind more heavenly, than to be at peace with all the world, with conscience, and with God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers;” for a holier, loftier pleasure does not exist than that of doing good; and if peace be happiness, and its opposite be misery, how godlike is the enjoyment of that man who restores to his brethren that best of blessings!

“Blessed are the pure in heart;” those who obey the law of God, not from fear, but from the absence of any desire beyond the bounds which that law has established; they whose virtue flows in natural and quiet beauty, from the unsullied fountain of an innocent mind.

Blessed are even the mourners and the persecuted; if their strength is in God. They may lose every other support, but they possess the love of their Father, and the hope of heaven. As other consolations fail, these grow brighter: till at length the event of death itself is met with tranquillity or even rapture, and conducts them to their full blessedness above.

HYMN.

ANONYMOUS.

‘Blest are the meek,’ he said
Whose doctrine is divine;
The humble-minded earth possess,
And bright in heaven will shine.

While here on earth they stay,
Calm peace with them shall dwell;
And cheerful hope, and heavenly joy,
Beyond what tongue can tell.

The God of peace is theirs;
They own his gracious sway;
And, yielding all their wills to him,
His sovereign laws obey.

No angry passions move,
 No envy fires the breast;
 The prospect of eternal peace
 Bids every trouble rest.

Oh gracious Father, grant
 That we this influence feel,
 That all we hope, or wish, may be
 Subjected to thy will.

SECTION XXI.

CONCLUSION OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

MATT. VII. 1. AND 21.

JUDGE not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore, whosoever-

er heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock : and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house ; and it fell not ; for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand : and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house ; and it fell ; and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine ; for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes.

REFLECTIONS.

“Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them,” said the Saviour, “I will liken him unto a wise man,” &c. What then are the rules, in obedience to which we shall find the foundation of our true happiness? They are, above all things, humility, peacefulness, and devotion to God : with enforcing these did the sermon on the mount commence. To these succeeds the precept to establish a high standard of right, not conformed merely to the requisitions of the world, or the traditions of other days. We are commanded to act, not only in a right manner, but from right motives ; banishing from our hearts the spirit of ostentation ; regarding as of comparatively little consequence the treasures, the honours of earth ; but entrusting these things to the care of Providence, to devote every power to the performance of duty. The discourse of the Saviour closes with instructions to avoid rash and harsh judgment, and at the same time, to exercise discretion in the choice of friends and advisers ; and above all, to repose with filial confidence on the love of our heavenly Father. The sure foun-

dation, never failing in the hour of danger, is thus described by Jesus, as consisting of humility, disinterestedness, candour, faith in God, and earnest endeavours to perform his will.

HYMN.

When, by pain and care oppressed,
 Anguish fills the trembling breast,
 When our earthly comforts fail.
 When temptation's floods assail,
 Father, in that fearful hour,
 Aid us by thy heavenly power.

When the blasts of adverse fate
 Leave the mighty desolate,
 When around in ruin wide
 Fall the lofty domes of pride,
 May our tower of safety be,
 Rock of ages! based on thee.

Transient are the joys of earth.
 As the hour that gives them birth;
 Faithless as a lovely dream,
 Fading at the morning's beam;
 Treacherous as the fleeting sand,
 Wave-washed on the ocean's strand.

But thy servants' trust, Oh Lord!
 Rests on thine unfailing word,
 On the precepts Jesus gave,
 On our Father's will to save,
 On the strength, and light, and love,
 Beaming from thy throne above.

SECTION XXII.

CURE OF A CENTURION'S SERVANT.

MATT. VIII.

WHEN he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand and touched him, saying, I will ; be thou clean. And immediately, his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man ; but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. And when he was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof ; but speak in a word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me : and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth ; and to another, Come, and he cometh ; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven : but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness ; there shall be

weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way ; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the self-same hour.

REFLECTIONS.

Faith in his power, was the condition required of those who implored our Saviour's aid. The time of his presence on earth is long since over, and to us, faith no more retains the miraculous efficacy which it once possessed. But its power still exists, though in another form. Still is it the softener of every bodily pain, the healer of every mental disease. The Christian, amid the trials of his course, raises his eye to that God, by whose providence they are all directed. He knows that there is a power on high to regulate apparent evil for the production of final good ; he recalls the memory of past mercies ; he dwells upon the goodness which sent the Saviour upon earth ; his soul seeks in prayer the throne of its Friend and Maker ; and earthly trials fade away for a season, from his remembrance, as he holds converse with a holier and a happier world. And when he turns from these contemplations, to meet again the ills that surround him, it is with his strength renewed, his hopes exalted, his whole soul filled with courage, and inspired to "press on to the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God, in Christ Jesus."

HYMN.

Strength, in duty's path to tread ;
Comfort to thy dying bed ;
Love to that all-bounteous Friend
From whose love thy joys descend ;
Peace, which earth can ne'er destroy ;
Pleasure, that shall never cloy ;
These shall heaven-eyed Faith confer
On the humble worshipper.

Visions of a brighter sphere,
Sent the struggling soul to cheer;—
Scenes that on the Christian's eye
Burst in glory from on high;—
What shall call your forms to light
Mid the cold earth's cheerless night?
These to Christian Faith are given,
Faith, the harbinger of heaven.

SECTION XXIII.

MIRACLE AT NAIN.

LUKE VII. 11.

AND it came to pass, the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people. Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier; and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, arise; and he that was dead sat up, and began to speak; and he delivered him to his mother. And there came a fear on all; and they glorified God, saying, that a great prophet is risen up among us; and that God hath visited his people. And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about. And the disciples of John showed him of all these things. And John, calling unto him two of his disciples, sent them

unto Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come, or look we for another? When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come, or look we for another? And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities, and plagues, and of evil spirits, and unto many that were blind he gave sight. Then Jesus answering, said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the 'dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

REFLECTIONS.

The miracles of Jesus were designed to prove that God had sent him, but it was ever his aim to make them also directly conducive to the happiness of mankind. Of this benevolence in the exertion of his wonderful power, the present is an affecting instance. Desolate indeed was the situation of her whom he relieved,—the widowed mother, a sufferer already under the dispensation which had deprived her of her husband, and now called to part from her only son, the last prop of her bereaved age. But the Saviour speaks, and while the tears are yet flowing over the bier of her lost one, she sees him restored to life, and presented to her again, with gentle words from her heavenly benefactor. How must she have blest the messenger of God, who thus employed the power given him from above! What tears of grateful joy must she have shed, with her recovered son! We too, like her, have mourned over friends; we too have felt what it is to be desolate on earth: shall not we, at length, like her, find the lost ones restored to us by divine beneficence? How blest will then be the reunion of long divided affections; how rapturous the offering of praise to the Universal Father!

HYMN.

BISHOP HEBER.

Wake not, O mother, sounds of lamentation :
 Weep not, O widow, weep not hopelessly !
 Strong is his arm, the bringer of salvation,
 Strong is the Word of God to succour thee.

Bear forth the cold corse, slowly, slowly, bear him !
 Hide his pale features with the sable pall ;
 Chide not the sad one, wildly weeping near him ;
 Widow'd and childless, she hath lost her all.

Why pause the mourners ? Who forbids our weeping ?
 Who the dark pomp of sorrow has delayed ?
 " Set down the bier. He is not dead, but sleeping ;
 Young man, arise ; " He spake, and was obeyed.

Change, then, O sad one, grief for exultation ;
 Worship and fall before Messiah's knee !
 Strong was his arm, the bringer of Salvation,
 Strong was the Word of God to succour thee.

SECTION XXIV.

MIRACULOUS CALM.

MARK IV. 30.

AND he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? It is like a grain of mustard-seed, which when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth : but when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches ; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the

shadow of it. And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it; but without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples. And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship; and there were also with him other ships. And there arose a great storm of wind; and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow; and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

REFLECTIONS.

It is the same being, who wept over the tomb of Lazarus, who took up little children in his arms and blessed them,—who, on the cross, forgot his own agony in the thought of his mother,—that now, in the majesty of the Son of God, commands, and “the wind and the sea obey him.” If ever a being could be raised above his race, if ever there were one in whom we should look to see no mixture of the softer human feelings, it would be one gifted with such power as Jesus possessed; yet never was there a heart in which every feeling of holy human nature glowed more warmly. How does his perfect character shame the cold philosophy which has been too prevalent, the philosophy of selfishness,

the idea that dignity or happiness can be attained by the destruction of the purer and gentler affections. The religion of Jesus smiles on all that is lovely in human character. At its voice, as at that of the Saviour on the lake of Galilee, the winds and waves of passion sink, and a holy and beautiful calm spreads over the soul beneath its sway.

HYMN.

MRS HEMANS.

Fear was within the tossing bark,
 When stormy winds grew loud;
 And waves came rolling high and dark,
 And the tall mast was bow'd.

And men stood breathless in their dread,
 And baffled in their skill—
 But One was there, who rose and said
 To the wild sea, "Be still!"

And the wind ceas'd :—it ceas'd !—that word
 Passed through the gloomy sky;
 The troubled billows knew their Lord,
 And sank beneath his eye.

And slumber settled on the deep,
 And silence on the blast,
 As when the righteous falls asleep,
 When death's fierce throes are past.

Thou that didst rule the angry hour,
 -And tame the tempest's mood;
 Oh! send thy spirit forth in power,
 O'er our dark souls to brood!

Thou that didst bow the billow's pride,
 Thy mandates to fulfil;—
 Speak, speak to passion's raging tide,
 Speak, and say—"Peace, be still."

SECTION XXV.

CURE OF A DEMONIAC.

LUKE VIII. 26.

AND they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man; for oftentimes it had caught him; and he was kept bound with chains, and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.) And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion; because many devils were entered into him. And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep. And there was there a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain; and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them. Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine; and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked. When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went, and told it in the city and in the country. Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were

departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind; and they were afraid. They also which saw it, told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed. Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about, besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear. And he went up into the ship, and returned back again.

REFLECTIONS.

What more fearful spectacle is there, than a mind in ruins? what more beneficent act than its restoration to intellectual health? What blessing then, can approach in value to a comparison with the intellectual portion of our nature! How should we bless the "Father of our spirits," that he has permitted us thus to bear the image of himself! And how deeply then are we responsible for the right cultivation and employment of our mental powers; for their development, fully, and in their due proportion. We here commence an existence which shall never end. How important that it should be commenced aright; that now, in this, the infancy of our being, we learn to love that God, whose presence will be with us through eternity; and to expand those faculties with which we are endowed, in such a manner, that ages hence we may look back on this dawn of our existence as a fit commencement for the bright course of heavenly glory to which it introduced us.

HYMN.

Oh uncreated Light and Love,
Dwelling in majesty above!
Thou, who didst blend the mental ray,
At Nature's dawn, with human clay;

Thy image, then, by thee impressed,
 Restore within thy children's breast.
 Make us from sin and error free,
 And sanctify our minds to thee !

Oh banish from thy servants' path
 The demon host of Scorn and Wrath,
 Error, with wildly beaming eye,
 And dull Insensibility.
 Blind Prejudice, and fierce Desire,
 And Malice, with his glance of fire.
 At thy command we burst their chain,
 And in thine image rise again.

And when, life's journey o'er, we tread
 The shadowy regions of the dead,
 When the last foe his threatening dart
 Points at the Christian's trembling heart,
 Thy mercy then, thy people's shield,
 Shall cause the last dread foe to yield,
 Thy sons shall pass the valley o'er,
 And in thy heavenly courts adore.



SECTION XXVI.

CURE OF A PARALYTIC.

MARK II.

AND again he entered into Capernaum, after some days ; and it was noised that he was in the house, and straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door ; and he preached the word unto them. And they came unto him, bringing one sick of the

palsy, which was borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was ; and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed whereon the sick of the palsy lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies ? Who can forgive sins but God only ? And immediately, when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts ? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven ; or to say, Arise, take up thy bed, and walk ? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all ; inso-much that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion. And he went forth again by the sea-side ; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.

REFLECTIONS.

The place where our Saviour stood was the court, common in the interior of eastern houses : and the part removed by the attendants of the sick man was either an awning, by which this court was sheltered from the sun, or a balustrade which surrounded it on the roof. Great indeed must have been the sick man's faith in the power of Jesus, thus to encounter exposure and fatigue, while already in a state of

exhaustion. Such should be our faith, when we look for relief to the religion of Jesus. Our bodily diseases are no longer removed by the word of our Saviour; but his spirit, and the power of his religion, if they indeed be living and active within us, can banish the disorders of the mind and heart, the paralysis of sin, the deadness of the soul. That such may be their influence we should seek as earnestly, as the sick man of Capernaum sought the presence of Jesus. Like him we should think no effort too great, no means to be left untried, that we may gain the end in view. Like him should we retain our trust, unbroken by delay, that the mental health we seek shall be restored to us, if we be true to ourselves, through the mercy of our heavenly Father.

HYMN.

With feeble pulse, and limbs, whose power
Had sunk, through many a painful hour,
The paralytic lay.

He heard of signs by Jesus wrought,
And to his couch the tidings brought
A gleam of cheerful day.

Hope came, and Faith, though oft her wing
Had soared in vain, dared upward spring
To greet the rescue nigh.
In vain the throng oppose his way;
His faithful guides their burthen lay
Before the Saviour's eye.

Thus, Lord, may we, in every grief,
Of thy rich mercy seek relief,
And never seek in vain;
And thus, when conscience wounded lies,
Oh bid the penitent arise
To life and strength again.

SECTION XXVII.

THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS RAISED TO LIFE.

LUKE VIII. 41.

AND behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue : and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house ; for he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went, the people thronged him. And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, came behind him and touched the border of his garment ; and immediately her issue of blood stanch'd. And Jesus said, Who touched me ? When all denied, Peter, and they that were with him, said, Master, the multitude throng thee, and press thee ; and sayest thou, Who touched me ? And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me ; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people, for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort : thy faith hath made thee whole ; go in peace. While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead : trouble not the Master. But when Jesus heard it, he answered him saying, Fear not ; believe only, and she shall be made

whole. And when he came to the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden. And all wept and bewailed her; but he said, Weep not: she is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat. And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.

REFLECTIONS.

Can we not see the blessed Saviour, standing in the midst of the group, with a look of calm, but joyful benevolence, as he witnesses the happiness he has produced? And how must the hearts of the family have been filled, and almost overpowered, by the union of awe, and love, and gratitude, and joy! Blessed Jesus! though thy life was one of suffering, in many an appalling form, there was one pleasure, even connected with this world, which was thine more fully than any other being ever possessed it,—the pleasure of doing good. What could have equalled the transport of thy emotions, in the midst of that favoured family; and what hours of delight must have been thine, when thy heart overflowed at the thought of that happiness, which would result to thousands, in this and in the future world, through thy life and death! May we, thy disciples, tread in the steps of our Saviour; and though it is not ours to bless, like thee, the eyes of mourning parents with the sight of their restored child, may we do our part in the work of usefulness, comforting the mourner, binding up the broken hearted, relieving, with our abundance, the necessities of poverty, and receiving, as the earnest of our heavenly reward, the blessings of those that were ready to perish.

HYMN.

MRS. GILMAN.

They have watched her last and quivering breath,
And the maiden's soul has flown;
They have wrapped her in the robes of death,
And laid her, dark and lone.

But the mother casts a look behind
Upon that fallen flower;
Nay, start not, 't was the passing wind,
Those limbs have lost their power.

And tremble not at that cheek of snow,
Over which the faint light plays;
'T is only the curtain's crimson glow,
Which thus deceives thy gaze.

Didst thou not close that expiring eye,
And feel the soft pulse decay?
And did not thy lips receive the sigh
That bore her soul away?

But listen! what name salutes her ear?
It comes to a heart of stone—
"Jesus," she cries, "has no power here,
"My daughter's life has flown."

He leads the way to that cold white couch,
And bends o'er that senseless form.
She breathes! She breathes! At his hallowed touch
The maiden's hand is warm.

And the fresh blood comes with its roseate hue,
And life spreads quick through her frame;
Her head is raised, and her step is true,
And she murmurs her mother's name.

SECTION XXVIII.

MISSION OF THE APOSTLES.

MATT. X.

AND when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these : The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother ; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother ; Philip, and Bartholomew ; Thomas, and Matthew the publican ; James the son of Alpheus, and Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus ; Simon the zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils : freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass, in your purses ; nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet a staff ; for the workman is worthy of his meat. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy ; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into a house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it ; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever

shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house, or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily, I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for that city. Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves : be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

REFLECTIONS.

It was most important for the object of their mission, that the Apostles should be at peace with all men; that no ground of offence should be afforded by them to any; and that no earthly care, no foreign pursuit, should be permitted to divide their attention. They are therefore warned, not to encumber themselves with any provision for their journey beyond the demands of necessity, and to accept readily the hospitality that might be offered. They are directed, not, during their stay in a city, to change their place of abode; lest their great object should be forgotten, in an anxious regard to personal convenience. Our Saviour teaches us not to be diverted by trifles, from the pursuit of important ends; to avoid, as far as possible, causes of contention with our fellow men; and especially to go on, in the pursuit of Christian excellence and usefulness, undisturbed by thoughts of worldly advantage or disadvantage; but ever keeping our grand object full in view; blending, in our means for its attainment, the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove.

HYMN.

Behold the apostolic band,
The servants of the Lord,
Convey to each remotest land
Their master's heavenly word.

A holy charge on them was laid,
And well that charge they bore,
As, trusting in their Father's aid,
They passed from shore to shore.

Fearless, when hostile men combined,
They stood, in power and love ;
And with the serpent's wisdom joined
The mildness of the dove.

And when disease, or sword, or flame,
From earth had set them free,
The souls to heaven from whence they came
Sprang upward, Lord ! to thee.

PART V.

TO THE RETURN OF THE TWELVE.

SECTION XXIX.

RAISING OF LAZARUS.

JOHN XI. 1. 17.

Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick)—Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was. Then after that, saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judea again. Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already. Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off; and many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him; but Mary sat still in the house. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died; but I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it

thee. Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again, in the resurrection, at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life ; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live ; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this ? She saith unto him ; Yea, Lord ; I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him. (Now Jesus was not yet come into the town ; but was in that place where Martha met him.) The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily, and went out, followed her saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him ; Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled ; and said, Where have ye laid him ? They say unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold, how he loved him ! And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died ? Jesus therefore, again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Then they took away the stone. And Jesus lift up his eyes,

and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always ; but because of the people which stand by, I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. He that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes ; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go. Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which he did, believed on him. But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

REFLECTIONS.

The feelings of sympathy and affection, sacred in themselves, are sanctioned by the religion of Jesus. It may be difficult, and it can be but of little use, to say what train of thoughts passed through the bosom of our Lord, and to account curiously for his shedding tears for an event which he was about to reverse. It is enough for us that he was by a friend's grave, with others weeping around him ; and when the fountain of tears, thrilled by whatever secret impulse, burst forth, we acknowledge there our Saviour, in all the loveliness of human feeling, but untainted with human sinfulness ; the model to which every emotion, and every thought should be conformed, as he was conformed to the will of his heavenly Father.

Many, we are told, of those who came with Mary, believed on him ; and well might they yield their faith, when they saw the tenant of the tomb for four days, come forth, a living man. But for us it is sufficient to pause where Jesus paused and wept. Powerful as was the evidence afforded by the raising of the dead to life, the evidence of those holy tears speaks more impressively. Tears are the language of

truth. An impostor never *wep't*, at the moment of perpetrating a deception.

HYMN.

EXETER COLLECTION.

“ See how he loved ! ” exclaimed the Jews,
As tender tears from Jesus fell ;
My grateful heart the thought pursues,
And on the theme delights to dwell.

See how he loved, who travelled on
Teaching the doctrine from the skies ;
Who bade disease and pain be gone,
And called the sleeping dead to rise.

See how he loved, who, firm, yet mild,
Patient endured the scoffing tongue ;
Though oft provoked, he ne'er reviled,
Nor did his greatest foe a wrong.

See how he loved, who never shrank
From toil or danger, pain or death ;
Who all the cup of sorrow drank,
And meekly yielded up his breath.

See how he loved, who died for man ;
Who laboured thus, and thus endured,
To finish the all-gracious plan,
Which life and heaven to man secured.

Such love can we, unmoved, survey ?
Oh may our breasts with ardour glow,
To tread his steps, his laws obey,
And thus our warm affection show !

SECTION XXX.

JESUS REBUKES THE SCRIBES.

MARK, III. 19.

AND they went into a house. And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him ; for they said, He is beside himself. And the scribes, which came down from Jerusalem, said, He hath Beelzebub ; and, By the prince of the devils casteth he out devils. And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan ? And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand ; and if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand ; and if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man, and then he will spoil his house. Verily I say unto you, all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and the blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme ; but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation. Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

There came then his mother and his brethren ; and standing without, sent unto him, calling him. And the multitude sat about him ; and they said unto him, Behold, hy mother and thy brethren without, seek for thee. And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or

my brethren? And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren. For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

REFLECTIONS.

The rebuke of Jesus to the scribes, was well merited by the perverseness with which, since they could not deny his miracles, they evaded the acknowledgment of his divine commission, by ascribing to the agency of demons, works which bore the impress of the Spirit of God; as though the powers of darkness could be employed in the destruction of their own empire,—the strong man assist in the spoiling of his own house; as though works of beneficence and holiness could proceed from an evil source.

A beautiful instance is afforded immediately after, of our Saviour's custom in applying every circumstance to the improvement of those around him. "Whosoever" he exclaimed, "shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother." Well did he express in these words, the warmth of affection, which united him to his disciples. Can we not endeavour to cherish similar feelings towards him? By the contemplation of his character, by meditation on his life, his words and actions, can we not learn to feel towards him, more than we now do, as indeed a friend and brother? Thus has he permitted us to regard him: and who, that values what is lovely, will relinquish the affectionate title thus conferred?

HYMN.

Who, as the brethren of the Lord,
 May his affection claim?
 To whom on earth does Christ accord
 A parent's honoured name?

The pure, the humble, the sincere,
 Whose hopes are fixed above ;
 Who worship God with holy fear,
 And ardent filial love ;

Who to the Saviour's word of grace
 With grateful warmth attend,
 Such does his loving heart embrace,
 Their brother and their friend.

For these, in dark Gethsemane,
 His bitter tears were shed ;
 For these, upon the fatal tree,
 He bowed his patient head.

Brethren of Jesus, may we share
 The love that filled his breast,
 On earth his burthen joyful bear,
 Then enter to his rest.



SECTION XXXI.

DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

MARK VI. 14.

And king Herod heard of Jesus, (for his name was spread abroad,) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him. Others said, That it is Elias. And others said That it is a prophet, even as one of the prophets. But when Herod heard thereof, he said, John, whom I beheaded, is risen from the dead.—For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison, for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife ; for he had married her. For John

had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him ; but she could not. For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy ; and observed him ; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly. And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birth day made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee ; and when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod, and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom. And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask ? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist. And the king was exceeding sorry, yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her. And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought. And he went and beheaded him in the prison ; and brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel ; and the damsel gave it to her mother. And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

REFLECTIONS.

A good man falls a victim to the caprice of a tyrant, directed by an artful and abandoned woman. We pity the sufferer, but do we envy his murderers? Could the grandeur of Herod compensate for the agony he endured, when the soul of John had ascended to its home in heaven? What peace could the depraved Herodias find, amid the storm of her own passions, in the thought that a servant of God had been murdered by her orders,—that another had been added to her dark list of crimes? The headlong passions of men make their own punishment. The malevolent may inflict agony on others, but for every wound he gives, a fiercer pain sinks into his own heart. The path of happiness is that of rectitude, though it lie amid dangers, and terminate in a violent and untimely death. That the length of life should be measured, not by its years, but its deeds, is an old observation. He in truth lives to most advantage, who has enjoyed most constantly true happiness; and this is to be found in the gratification of the generous and affectionate feelings, in the approbation of conscience, and in the love of God.

HYMN.

The monarch gave his edict forth,
His ready slaves obeyed,
The holy Baptist in his blood
Upon the earth was laid.

Yet who could then with envy view
The tyrant in his pride,
Or not the prophet's fate prefer
Who by his order died?

Another's vengeance to perform,
The bloody deed was done ;
And now remorse and anguish sate
With Herod on his throne.

The prophet's soul, by earthly pain
And care no more oppressed,
Rejoicing to its Maker sprung,
To heaven's eternal rest.

PART VI.

TO THE DEPARTURE OF JESUS FROM GALILEE.



SECTION XXXII.

FIVE THOUSAND MIRACULOUSLY FED.

MARK VI. 30.

AND the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught. And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while. For there were many coming and going; and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately. And the people saw them departing; and many knew him; and ran afoot thither out of all cities. And when he came out, he saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep, not having a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed; send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread; for they have nothing to eat. He answered and said unto them, Give

ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat? He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? Go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes. And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds and by fifties. And when he had taken the five loaves, and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all. And they did all eat and were filled. And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes. And they that did eat of the loaves were five thousand men.

REFLECTIONS.

In one or two instances, and for the relief of a few thousands, was a supernatural provision made. We recognise the benevolence and the power thus manifested, but we pass by unthought of, the same divine attributes, as they are exhibited in the supply of our daily wants. Yet is that goodness which refreshed for a season the weariness of an assembly, more worthy of admiration than that which created and sustains, age after age, millions of happy creatures, nay, worlds and systems without number? If we reverence that power which afforded thus a temporary supply, with what feelings should we contemplate that which created our beautiful world, which brought into being the various races of animals, our own bodies "fearfully and wonderfully made," and our thinking and immortal spirits,—which so balanced and harmonized the whole of this magnificent universe, that the daily, hourly wants of its countless members are met by the operation of regular and uninterrupted laws? We should

recognise the Supreme Being more as the God of Providence, acknowledging in the air we breathe, the Sun which gives us light, in our daily food, our social blessings, the goodness and wisdom of the Author of Nature, who established, in the beginning, the unchanging order of the universe.

HYMN.

BISHOP HEBER.

Oh King of earth, and air and sea
 The hungry ravens cry to thee ;
 To thee, the scaly tribes that sweep
 The bosom of the boundless deep ;

To thee the lions roaring call,
 The common Father, kind to all !
 Then grant thy servants, Lord, we pray,
 Our daily bread from day to day.

Thy bounteous hand with food can bless
 The bleak and lonely wilderness ;
 And taught by thy dear Son, we pray
 For daily bread from day to day.

And Oh, when through the wilds we roam,
 That part us from our heavenly home ;
 When, lost in danger, want and woe,
 Our faithless tears begin to flow,

Do thou thy gracious comfort give,
 By which alone the soul may live ;
 And grant thy servants, Lord, we pray,
 The bread of life from day to day.

SECTION XXXIII.

JESUS WALKS ON THE SEA.

MATT. XIV. 22.

AND straightway he constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray. And when the evening was come, he was there alone. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves ; for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night, he went unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit ; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer, it is I ; be not afraid. And Peter answered him, and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid ; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord save me ! And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, Oh thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt ? And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.—And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret. And

when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about ; and brought unto him all that were diseased, and besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment ; and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.

REFLECTIONS.

The apostle was earnest in his request for permission to meet his Lord on the waves ; but when the boon was granted, his confidence failed him. The incident shows the character of the man ; ardent, full of confidence, but too susceptible to the impressions of the moment, and therefore liable to fail at the time of trial. It exhibits the character which at one moment prompted him to be foremost in professions of unvarying fidelity, and a short time afterwards left him to deny his master in the hall of the high priest. It is not the part of wisdom to rush into trials beyond our strength to bear. We must not, in vain self confidence, place ourselves in the midst of temptation ; and then forsaken by our faith, sink in the sea around. It is related of William of Orange, the deliverer of Holland, that he would tremble and turn pale at the distant anticipation of danger, but become cool and fearless as it approached. Thus should the christian view the dangers of his moral condition. Let him avoid temptation, even with fear and trembling, while it can properly be avoided ; but when it comes, let him meet it with every power in readiness for exertion. Let him then listen no more to fear or desire, but hear alone the voice that calls on him to tread the waves ; not casting his terrified glance on the dangers around, but having the eye of faith fixed steadily on his Saviour.

HYMN.

Lord, in whose might the Saviour trod
 The dark and stormy wave ;
 And trusted in his Father's arm,
 Omnipotent to save !

When darkly round our footsteps rise
 The floods and storms of life,
 Send thou thy Spirit down to still
 The elemental strife.

Strong in our trust, on thee reposed,
 The ocean path we'll dare ;
 Though waves around us rage and foam
 Since thou art present there.



SECTION XXXIV.

JESUS AND THE WOMAN OF CANAAN.

MATT. xv. 21.

THEN Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coast, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, Oh Lord, thou son of David ; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away, for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me ! But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's

bread, and cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord ; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, Oh woman, great is thy faith ; be it unto thee, even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee ; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there. And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others ; and cast them down at Jesus' feet, and he healed them ; insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see ; and they glorified the God of Israel. Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because it is now three days that they continue with me, and they have nothing to eat ; and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way. And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness as to fill so great a multitude ? And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye ? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled ; and they took up of the broken meat that was left, seven baskets full. And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children. And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala.

REFLECTIONS.

The answer of Jesus to the woman of Canaan was probably designed to exhibit more fully the humility and faith of his petitioner; and great indeed must these have been, to frame so modest yet so touching an answer to his words. The dealings of Providence may seem harsh to us, as the reply of the Lord might have appeared to his humble applicant; but it is not for us to murmur. Our duty will be best fulfilled by submitting meekly to the decrees of our heavenly Father, while we continue, undiscouraged by past denials, to direct our prayers to him for what we need. Let all our petitions be presented with that humble, and untiring faith, which marked the answer of the Syrophenician woman, and those petitions will be answered. True, the blessings we ask may be withheld; but we shall find, in the peace of our own hearts, in our increased submissiveness to the will of God, the answer of his spirit within us.

HYMN.

J. SCOTT.

Happy the meek, whose gentle breast,
Clear as the summer's evening ray,
Calm as the regions of the blest,
Enjoys on earth celestial day.

His heart no broken friendships sting,
No storms his peaceful tent invades;
He rests beneath the Almighty's wing,
Hostile to none, of none afraid.

Spirit of grace, all meek and mild!
Inspire our breasts, our souls possess;
Repel each passion, rude and wild,
And bless us, as we aim to bless.

SECTION XXXV.

PETER'S CONFESSION OF CHRIST.

MATT. XVI. 13.

WHEN Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man, that he was the Christ. From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee. But he turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan; thou

art an offence unto me ; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it ; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul ? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels ; and then shall he reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

REFLECTIONS.

“ Whom say ye that I am ? ” inquired the Saviour. The ardent Peter unhesitatingly replied by acknowledging the Messiahship of his master. But his ideas of the Messiah’s character and kingdom were far from being correct. He expected, under that title, an earthly king ; and when he heard Jesus speak of his approaching death, he listened with incredulous surprise. He checks what he imagines to be the gloomy forebodings of his master ; and would lead him to other, and more flattering prospects, of earthly power and magnificence. But the holy Son of God repels the temptations, in the same language which repressed the same suggestion in the wilderness ; “ Get thee hence, Tempter ! thou wouldst lead me into sin.” In such words may the full meaning of his reply be conveyed. He saw the dangers, the certain death, which awaited him ; he saw the visions of ease, and ambition glittering before him ; but his pure mind was unmoved by fear, unseduced by hope. With the glory of God and the happiness of mankind in view, he

passed onward, conqueror over every trial, to the last great victory—a cruel death.

HYMN.

Oh suffering friend of human kind!
How, as the fatal hour drew near,
Came thronging on thy holy mind
The images of grief and fear!

Gethsemane's sad midnight scene,
The faithless friends, the exulting foes,
The thorny crown, the insult keen,
The scourge, the cross, before thee rose.

Did not thy spirit shrink dismayed,
As the dark vision o'er it came;
And, though in sinless strength arrayed,
Turn shuddering, from the death of shame?

Onward, like thee, through scorn and dread,
May we our Father's call obey,
Steadfast thy path of duty tread,
And rise, through death, to endless day.

SECTION XXXVI.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

MATT. XVII. XIX. 1 and 2.

AND after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother; and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart. And he was transfigured before them; and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And behold, there appeared unto

them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here ; if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles ; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them : and behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead. And his disciples asked him saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come ? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things ; but I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea, beyond Jordan. And great multitudes followed him ; and he healed them there.

REFLECTIONS.

“This,” said the voice from heaven, “this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye him.” With what awe must those three disciples after this command,

have attended to the instructions of their master! He has passed from earth; but there is a voice yet speaking to us in his life, there is a voice in his death, which, if we have hearts not deadened by sin, we cannot but hear. In his unequalled gentleness, his affectionate resignation to the will of God, his patient dignity, his dying prayer for the forgiveness of his murderers, there is eloquence indeed. Would that we could hear it, as his disciples heard! Could we but gaze on the Saviour ourselves; and in deed and truth hear from those blessed lips the words of eternal life! Could we stand on the mount of Transfiguration, and thence go with him, and stand at the foot of the cross! It may not be. We are not thus privileged. Yet may we read the records of his life, and thus at least, listen to the words of our Saviour. May we hear him, and obey! His voice will be to us one of heavenly mildness. Earth will be clothed with new beauties, as we regain that innocence, which alone can enable us to enjoy it truly. Heaven will expand before us in holier splendours, as our heart and life approach to the resemblance of the purity which dwells there.

HYMN.

Thou, by pain and care oppressed,
Lift the eye with sorrow dim;
In thy Saviour's love find rest;
Child of suffering, hear thou him!

Trifler of the passing hour,
Vain the pleasures earth can give;
Stay thy course; thy Saviour's power
Calls thee; hear, and turn, and live!

Wanderer on the downward road,
Far from virtue's guiding ray;
Turn to happiness, to God;
Jesus calls thee; turn, and pray!

Hear ye him, your Lord, your friend,
Who to save you lived and died ;
Hear him, and till life shall end,
In his holy word abide.

Fixing Faith's bright gaze above,
Hear him, while on earth ye tread :
Ye shall hear his tones of love,
When the trumpet wakes the dead.

PART VII.

TO THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

SECTION XXXVII.

JESUS REBUKES THE ARDOUR OF HIS DISCIPLES.

LUKE IX. 51. and XIX.

AND it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers before his face; and they went and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples, James and John, saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Know ye not what manner of spirit ye are of? And they went to another village.

And Jesus entered, and passed through Jericho. And behold, there was a man named Zaccheus; which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus, who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him;

for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, that he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house; forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

REFLECTIONS.

“Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?” How different is the spirit which these words evince, from that which one of the speakers afterwards inculcated;—“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth, not knoweth not God; for God is love.—He that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?” (1 John, iv. 7. 8. 20.) The apostle John is considered, and justly, as exemplifying, more than any, save Jesus himself, the spirit of Christian gentleness. Love to God and man seem personified in him. Whence was this change? Whence did the ardent partisan, designated by his Lord as a “Son of thunder,” who was ready to call down fire from heaven on the Samaritan village, acquire the meekness which beams, like a glory, round “the disciple whom Jesus loved?”—Whence, but from drinking deeply of the spirit of his Master? Bright example of the

influence of Christianity! Blessed power of Religion, to breathe into the fiery zealot the gentleness of the dove!

HYMN.

ANONYMOUS.

Great God, whose all pervading eye
Sees every passion in my soul!
When sunk too low, or raised too high,
Teach me those passions to control.

Temper the fervours of my frame;
Be charity their constant spring:
And O, let no unhallow'd flame
Pollute the offerings which I bring.

Let love with piety unite
To mend the bias of my will;
While hope and heaven-eyed faith excite,
And wisdom regulates my zeal.

That wisdom which to meekness turns,
Wisdom descending from above;
And let my zeal, whene'er it burns,
Be kindled by the fire of love.

SECTION XXXVIII.

CHRIST'S ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.

LUKE XIX. 28.

AND when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem. And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called the mount of Olives, he sent two of his

disciples, saying, Go ye into the village over against you ; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat ; loose him and bring him hither. And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose him ? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him. And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them. And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt ? And they said, The Lord hath need of him. And they brought him to Jesus ; and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon. And as they went, they spread their clothes in the way. And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord ; peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace ! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side ; and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee ; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another ; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

REFLECTIONS.

Holy Saviour, what are thy thoughts, as weeping in thy hour of triumph, thou passest onward to the city of thy fathers? It was not for his own approaching death; it was not for the scorn that awaited him,—for the clamours of the crowd, “Crucify him, crucify him,” that the tears of Jesus were shed. It was for his countrymen, the chosen people of God, about to be cast out from among the nations for their rejection of him.

But now the band assumes more the appearance of a triumphal procession. The followers of Jesus wave their palm-branches in the air; the path is spread with their garments in honour of him whom they accompany, and the whole city is moved to meet him. He meantime, performs his part, now as in times of suffering and danger, with calm, collected dignity. He knows the fate that in a few days must be his, and he goes on to meet it as firmly as though he believed, with his exulting followers, that this was the commencement of a temporal reign. Let his equal mind afford an example to those who bear his name, to pass through every scene with unshaken self-control, never elated by prosperity beyond the bounds of moderate and grateful enjoyment, never depressed by adversity so far as to forget the Providence of God, or to swerve from the path of duty.

HYMN.

BISHOP HEBER.

Ride on, ride on in majesty!
Hark! all the tribes Hosannas cry!
Thine humble beast pursues his road,
With palms and scattered garments strewed.

Ride on, ride on in majesty !
 In lowly pomp ride on to die!
 Oh Christ, thy triumphs now begin
 O'er captive death and conquered sin !

Ride on, ride on in majesty !
 Thy last and fiercest strife is nigh ;
 The Father on his glorious throne
 Expects his own anointed Son.

Ride on, ride on in majesty !
 In lowly pomp ride on to die !
 Bow thy meek head to mortal pain,
 Then take, O Christ, thy power and reign !

SECTION XXXIX.

JESUS ANOINTED AT BETHANY.

MATT. xxvi.

AND it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover ; and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the Elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas ; and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.

Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, there came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and

poured it on his head as he sat at meat. But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

REFLECTIONS.

From the account of John (xii. 3.) it appears that she who thus expressed her gratitude to Jesus, was Mary, the sister of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead, and that the censorious remark proceeded from the traitor, Judas Iscariot. His language affords an instance of that species of narrow-mindedness, by which nothing is considered useful, except as it directly supports life, or relieves absolute want. Our Saviour's reply shows that such was not his principle. He did not approve the spirit, which would excuse itself from honouring a benefactor, on the plea that gratitude would be too expensive. Frugality is indeed a virtue; but there is a point, to which if it be carried, it loses that character

and assumes the opposite; destroying hospitality and the charms of social life, narrowing the mind, and fixing it, with disgraceful keenness of perception, on the smallest gains. Much has the command of our Lord been insisted on, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost;" and rightly; for that care of temporal concerns, which from present abundance wisely provides against future need, is a duty sanctioned alike by reason and scripture. But while we impress that precept on our minds, let it be remembered that he from whom it came approved the munificent demonstration of gratitude, made to him by the sister of him he loved.

HYMN.

See the grateful sister bending
O'er her much-loved Saviour's form;
While her thanks to heaven ascending,
From her heart burst pure and warm.
For his mercy, prompt to save,
Doth she bless her heavenly Lord,
For a brother from the grave
To the light of life restored.

Who shall blame the kind oblation,
Perfumes rich, profusely shed?
No! Through each remotest nation
Shall her grateful fame be spread!
Fair the diamond's star-like blaze,
Through the dark mine richly strewed;
Fairer far the gentle rays
Of the Christian's gratitude.

SECTION XL.

INSTITUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

MATT XXVI. 17.

Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples. And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover. Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I? And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of man goeth, as it is written of him; but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him; Thou hast said. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed

for many, for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

REFLECTIONS.

We may acquaint ourselves with the feelings, to perpetuate which the Supper of the Lord was instituted, by contemplating an assembly of his disciples, in subsequent years, when time had dimmed in their memory the image of their Lord, and what once were facts transacted in their presence, had assumed the colder form of doctrines. But imagine them gathering in Jerusalem for the celebration of the service which he instituted, around the table at which he once presided, repeating the words he once spoke. They raise to their lips in turn that cup of which he had said, "This do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." And is not their master then among them; and do not they once more hear his voice, and see the look of benignity with which he said on that memorable night, "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you: yet a little while and the world seeth me no more, *but ye see me?*" Yes! at such moments must that prediction indeed have been verified. At such moments may we yet experience its truth. As we engage in the service of Christian communion, the intervening centuries vanish, and the Saviour and his disciples rise before us; we hear the professions of the ardent Peter; we see the affectionate John, leaning on his master's breast. Often let us seek their presence, and gaze, delighted, on the living, "Image of the Invisible God."

HYMN.

MONTGOMERY.

According to thy gracious word,
In meek humility,
This will I do, my dying Lord,
I will remember thee.

Thy body, broken for my sake,
My bread from heaven shall be ;
The testamental cup I take,
And thus remember thee.

Gethsemane can I forget ?
Or there thy conflict see,
Thine agony and bloody sweat,
And not remember thee ?

When to the cross I turn mine eyes,
And rest on Calvary,
Oh Lamb of God, my sacrifice !
I must remember thee :

Remember thee, and all thy pains,
And all thy love to me ;
Yea, while a breath, a pulse remains
Will I remember thee.

And when these failing lips grow dumb,
And mind and memory flee,
When thou shalt in thy kingdom come,
Thou wilt remember me.

SECTION XLI.

JESUS WASHES THE DISCIPLES' FEET.

JOHN XIII 1. and 33.

Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end ; and supper being ended, (the devil having now put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him,) Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God ; he riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments, and took a towel, and girded himself ; after that, he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter ; and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet ? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit ; and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him ; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he

said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you. Ye call me Master and Lord ; and ye say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye, if ye do them.

Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me ; and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come, so now I say unto you. A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another ; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou ? Jesus answered him, whither I go, thou canst not follow me now ; but thou shalt follow me afterward. Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now ? I will lay down my life for thy sake. Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake ? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

REFLECTIONS.

This passage affords a very striking instance of our Lord's manner of illustrating and impressing a principle ; and what an example does it afford of noble humility ! It is not without reference to his subject that the apostle John commences this chapter by referring to the situation and feelings of the Saviour at the time. " Jesus knew that his hour was come ;" and if at any time his mind might naturally be filled exclusively with thoughts of himself and his own sufferings, it

might be then. But no. His love for his disciples yielded not in the prospect of death. "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." He would give them, before he went to his Father, a lesson of love; a lesson which they should long remember, of that love which he had felt for them, and which he desired that they should feel towards each other. He "knew that the father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;" but exalted as he was, he hesitated not to perform a menial office to his followers, that they might remember and feel more deeply the lesson he designed to convey. Oh where is pride? Where is the haughtiness of station or of birth? Do they not shrink into nothingness at the contemplation of the Son of God employed in such an office of holy humility?

HYMN.

And dost thou deign, my blessed Lord,
Arrayed in power and love divine,
Thus humbly to enforce thy word,
And let thy meekness foster mine?

May thy meek spirit far remove
From my frail heart, insensate pride!
And grant my days, with humble love
To God and man, in peace to glide.

May never hate this breast annoy,
And never scorn within it burn,
Nor envy at another's joy
Its springs to bitter waters turn.

Let me with thee the path pursue
Thy love and heavenly mildness trod,
Till brighter scenes the course renew,
In glory from the throne of God.

SECTION XLII.

PRAYER IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.

MATT. XXVI. 36.

THEN cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What! could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, Oh my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. And he came and found them asleep again; (for their eyes were heavy;) and he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Are ye sleeping on now, and taking your rest? behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going; behold, he is at hand that doth betray me. And while he yet spake,

lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he ; hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master ; and kissed him. And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come ? Then came they and laid hands on Jesus, and took him. And behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword ; and struck a servant of the high priest, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place ; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels ? But how then shall the scripture be fulfilled ? for thus it must be. In the same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Ye are come out as against a thief, with swords and staves for to take me ; I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me ; but all this was done that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

REFLECTIONS.

Our Saviour's perfect foreknowledge of his approaching doom, imparted the depth of agony to an hour like this, when all was removed which could keep from his mind the dark image that rose before it. In the midnight silence of Gethsemane, and with no one near him but his slumbering apostles, he had a foretaste in its full bitterness, of that cup of woe, which awaited him 'on the morrow. We may well doubt how far the reality of bodily pain exceeded the mental an-

guish, now imparted by the fearfully distinct anticipation of his sufferings. A new pang too was inflicted on him by the insensibility of his followers. He could not derive strength from their sympathy, for they understood not yet his character or his destiny. While he prayed in agony, they were sleeping. There was but One Being in the universe to whom he could look for aid or consolation, his Father in heaven. And how, even in that darkest hour, did the holy mind of Jesus triumph over the strength of agony! Language is vain to describe, it can but detract from the impressiveness of the scene. All that can be said, all that can be felt, of the strength of human suffering, and the still greater strength of faith, is comprised in his brief prayer, "Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

HYMN.

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

Faint not, poor traveller, though thy way
Be rough like that thy Saviour trod;
Though cold and stormy lower the day,
This path of suffering leads to God.

Nay, sink not, though from every limb
Are starting drops of toil and pain;
Thou dost but share the lot of him,
With whom his followers are to reign.

Christian! thy friend, thy master prayed,
While dread and anguish shook his frame;
Then met his sufferings undismayed;
Wilt thou not strive to do the same?

Oh, think'st thou that his Father's love
Shone round him then with fainter rays,
Than now, when, throned all height above,
Unceasing voices hymn his praise?

Go, sufferer, calmly meet the woes,
Which God's own mercy bids thee bear ;
Then, rising as thy Saviour rose,
Go, his eternal victory share.

SECTION XLIII.

JESUS BEFORE THE HIGH PRIEST.

MATT. XXVI. 57.

AND they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. But Peter followed him afar off, unto the high priest's palace, and went, and sat with the servants to see the end. Now the chief priests and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death. But they found none, though many false witnesses came. At the last came two false witnesses, and said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? What is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee, by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said. Nevertheless I say unto you, hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now ye have heard his blasphem-

my, What think ye. They answered and said, He is guilty of death. Then did they spit in^s his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smotethee?

Now Peter sat without in the palace. And a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them, that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath; I do not know the man. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them, for thy speech bewrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the words of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

REFLECTIONS.

Let us do justice to the the great apostle, whose melancholy fall is here recorded. The temptation to which he yielded, assumed a form different from his anticipations, and for which consequently he was unprepared. When he exclaimed, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee," he thought not of any trials save those of personal fear; and those he knew that he could resist. Had danger alone been before him, he would have followed willingly, as he followed in his after years, to prison and to death. But when he saw his master tried as a criminal before the

rulers of his nation, to whom he had ever been used to look up with awe, when the miraculous power of Jesus seemed withdrawn, and Jesus himself abandoned alike by heaven and earth to the wrath of his enemies, then the faith of the disciple was shaken; with his faith, his courage fled; and that very ardour which prompted his bold assertions of fidelity, now hurried him to falshood and perjury.

But "the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter." The voice of Jesus had stilled the waves of the sea. Now, at his look, the wilder waves of passion were hushed in the bosom of his disciple; all but deep and bitter remorse, and love which would now make him indeed ready to die with his master, rather than deny him. "He went out, and wept bitterly." To him much was forgiven, for he loved much; and a life spent in steadfast endurance in his master's cause, was at length crowned by a martyr's glorious death.

HYMN.

Weep not for those, in Christ who sleep,
 Within the cold grave's dreamless bed.
 Their rest is calm, and angels keep
 Watch o'er each heaven-beloved head.
 Their strife is closed, their crown is won;
 To realms of bliss their spirits soar,
 And, near their heavenly Father's throne,
 Live in his smile, to die no more.

But weep for those, who here below,
 Through trial's stormy ocean steer;
 Who mid the mountain billows go,
 By hope misled, or driven by fear.
 And oh, for him, in danger's hour
 Whose heart hath sunk, whose faith is dim,
 Who falls before the tempter's power,
 Weep, child of frailty, weep for him.

Yet, in the hour of guilt and shame,
 Jesus, thy glance could bring relief,
 The wandering spirit could reclaim,
 And ope the source of hallowed grief.
 Thus, when we leave thy heavenly way,
 Lord, may the love, the thought of thee,
 Subdue each sinful passion's sway,
 And, in thy spirit, make us free.

SECTION XLIV.

JESUS BEFORE PILATE.

JOHN XVIII. 27. and XIX.

THEN led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment; and it was early. And they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the passover. Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man? They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor we would not have delivered him up unto thee. Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death. That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die. Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me; what

hast thou done ? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world ; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not have been delivered to the Jews ; but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then ? Jesus answered, Thou sayest truth ; for I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth ? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find no fault in him at all. But ye have a custom that I should release unto you one at the passover ; will ye, therefore, that I release unto you the King of the Jews ? Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, and said, Hail, King of the Jews ! And they smote him with their hands. Pilate went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. (Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe.) And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man ! When the chief priest therefore and officers saw him, they cried out saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him ; for I find no fault in him. The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid, and went again into the judgment

hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou. But Jesus gave him no answer. Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, unless it were given thee from above; therefore, he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

REFLECTIONS.

What a contrast is presented in this scene, between the judge, and the holy prisoner before him. In Pilate we see an inclination to do right, struggling ineffectually with the maxims of a cold-hearted policy; and from the high station which he holds, he sinks to be an object of pity and indignation; pity for his vacillating weakness, when the path of duty lay plain before him,—indignation at the crime into which he suffers himself to be led. Before this timorous yet unjust judge, stands the Saviour of mankind, acknowledging calmly the power which the Governor possesses over him, as a power derived from God, and submitting therefore to the decree of Providence. With the unaffected dignity of innocence, he describes the spiritual nature of his kingdom, and declares the object for which he came into the world. Did not a feeling of the beauty of holiness enter the mind of Pilate, as he listened to his prisoner? The proud and politic Roman felt the nobler feelings of his nature awakened from their long slumber, and sought to release the man whom he could not but revere and love. But he dared not to meet the clamours of the populace, and the indignation of his jealous superiors. The fear of man brought a snare upon him. The remonstrances of conscience were hushed, and he decreed the death of Jesus.

HYMN.

In Pilate's hall, by scornful Pharisees
Surrounded, and by dark-browed Roman bands,
Before the procurator's footstool stands
The Son of God, the glorious Prince of Peace.
Alone he stands, his followers all have fled ;
In mockery o'er his limbs a robe is thrown
Of regal purple ; and a thorny crown
Appears in scorn upon his sacred head.
But calm he spake ; From God my cause proceeds ;
Without his will thou canst not harm a hair
Upon my brow ; then patient will I bear
The unrighteous punishment of holy deeds.
I am a king, but not with mortal state.
He said, and humbly died, the greatest of the great..

And oh, what beams of dignity and love
Flowed o'er his sacred features, as he stood
Calmly, amid the foes who sought his blood,
His eyes upturning to his home above !
The haughty judge in admiration gazed,
And spoke him guiltless ; but the frantic crowd
Demand their victim's death, with clamors loud,
As the fierce scribes their stormy passions raised.
Follower of Jesus ! learn of him to bear
Unmoved, the fury of victorious foes ;
Though shame environ thee, and anguish close
Thy dying eyes, yet shrink not ; thou dost share
Thy Master's sufferings ; thou shalt share his rest ;
Oh, learn of him to live, to die, and to be blest.

SECTION XLV.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

JOHN XIX. 12.

AND from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him. But the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Cesar's friend; whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cesar. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat, in a place that is called the pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha; (and it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour;) and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him; away with him; crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cesar. Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.

And he, bearing his cross, went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha; where they crucified him, and two others with him; on either side one, and Jesus in the midst. And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews, for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city; and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he

said, I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written, I have written.—Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, (and made four parts, to every soldier a part,) and also his coat. Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be. That the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my garments among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.—Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then he saith to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

REFLECTIONS.

If the Christian were called on to mention the most touching incident in the history of his Redeemer, would he not name this,—the recommendation of his mother to the care of his beloved disciple? We see the Saviour, at the moment of extremest pain, a moment when personal suffering might well absorb every other feeling. But his mother is standing near him, his mother, soon to be left desolate in a world which would look upon her with scorn, as the parent of one who had been crucified. The agony of death yields for a moment to the strength of filial affection, and Jesus consigns his mother to his faithful friend. The centurion, when he saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, said, "Truly, this was the Son of God!"

We see not these things, but we hear the voice, we see the feelings of the sufferer himself, and we need no other proof. Religion can never manifest itself in a form more lovely, than when combined with the exercise of the social duties, the affections of the parent, the child, the friend. Where these duties are performed, these affections cultivated aright, there must religion be present, unseen perhaps, except in its effects, but regulating actions, words and thoughts, making this life happy, and preparing him in whose breast it dwells, for the happiness of heaven.

HYMN.

MONTGOMERY.

The morning dawns upon the place
Where Jesus spent the night in prayer :
Through yielding glooms behold his face;
Nor form, nor comeliness is there.

Last eve by those he called his own,
Betrayed, forsaken, or denied,
He met his enemies alone,
In all their malice, rage, and pride.

No guile within his mouth is found,
He neither threatens nor complains ;
Meek as a lamb for slaughter bound,
Dumb midst his murd'ers he remains.

But hark ! he prays,—'t is for his foes ;
He speaks,—'t is comfort to his friends ;
Answers,—and Paradise bestows ;
He bows his head ;—the conflict ends.

Truly this was the Son of God !
Though in a servant's mean disguise,
And bruised beneath the Father's rod ;
Not for himself,—for man he dies.

SECTION XLVI.

DEATH OF JESUS.

LUKE XXIII. 34. 39.

THEN said Jesus, Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do.—And one of the malefactors, which were hanged, railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. The other, answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly ; for we receive the due reward of our deeds ; but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise. And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth, until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened ; and the vail of the temple was rent in the midst. And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. And having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

Now, when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man. And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts and returned. And all his acquaintances, and the woman that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.—And behold, a man

named Joseph, a counsellor, a good man, and a just, (the same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them,) of Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who also himself waited for the kingdom of God; this man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on.

REFLECTIONS.

It has been well remarked, that one instance of forgiveness at the hour of death is recorded, that we should not despair; but only one, that we should not presume. We can however hardly suppose the man who now spoke, to have been long versed in crime. His faith in the Saviour, at a moment when our Lord's disciples had deserted him, and the victory of his enemies seemed complete, is an evidence almost conclusive to the contrary. Jesus, ever full of compassion, could, even at that awful moment, feel for his fellow sufferer, though a robber. Though extended on the cross, in the deepest agony, he had not lost either the power or the will to bless. He could still give a word of kindness and hope, a gracious promise to the humble petitioner.

But the struggle soon closed, and the Saviour of the world sunk in death, murdered by those whom he came to bless. Follower of Jesus, he died that you might live. Thoughtless neglecter of his religion, he died for you; and how will you free yourself from the reproach of ingratitude? If we had stood near his cross, and witnessed the final scene, could we ever obliterate the impression? Could we forbear to love and to obey him? And now, though intervening centuries have weakened in some respects, the impression of his death, they have developed more fully its influence on the world.

To the dying love of Jesus we owe the blessings of education, refinement, morals, religion. Are we then uninterested in the great event? Oh let us give our hearts to him who gave his life for us!

HYMN.

In the Saviour's hour of death,
 Bound upon the cross of fear,
 While his quick and struggling breath
 Spoke the fatal moment near;
 Then his glance a felon turned,
 Suffering at the sufferer's side,
 And the grace which others spurned
 Sought in prayer, and found, and died.

Sighs of parting anguish came
 From the Saviour's laboring breast;
 But though torture thrilled his frame,
 He could yield the afflicted rest;
 And a transient, heavenly smile
 Beamed upon his pallid face,
 As his anguish, for a while,
 Gave to love and pity place.

Matchless love, supreme in death!
 Pity, in affliction shown!
 Be their praise o'er earth beneath,
 And through heavenly regions known.
 Men their grateful songs shall swell,
 For their Saviour's love divine;
 In our hearts his spirit dwell,
 In our lives his influence shine.

PART VIII.

TO THE ASCENSION OF JESUS.

SECTION XLVII.

THE RESURRECTION.

JOHN XX.

THE first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre; and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together; and that other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And he, stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped up together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. For as yet

they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again unto their own home. But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping. And as she wept, she stooped down and looked into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. When she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing; and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God and your God. Mary Magdalene came, and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

REFLECTIONS.

The great event, the death of Jesus, has taken place. It is followed by one, in some points of view still greater. The Saviour rises from the tomb. Till that moment, his enemies had appeared to triumph, but now the power of the Almighty is manifested, and all other powers sink to nothing. Until that moment, doubt might have questioned the

possibility of a resurrection from the dead, but all doubt vanishes, as the Lord Jesus, "the first fruits of them that sleep," bursts the confinement of the grave. Thus shall his followers rise; "Those that sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him." Thus "all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." The christian sees in the resurrection of his Saviour the earnest of his own. How then, should we ask ourselves, how shall we rise, when the sleep of death is broken? Shall it be to light and glory, as our Lord arose? Shall it be to join the company of the just made perfect? Can we have even now, a steadfast hope that such will be the case? If so, happy are we, for to us death has lost its terrific nature; it is no longer the extinction of existence, but only a step,—the lifting of a curtain,—the passing a projecting rock, which discloses to us but another and brighter scene of our unbroken and endless being.

HYMN.

REV. H. WARE JR.

Lift your glad voices in triumph on high,
 For Jesus hath risen, and man cannot die.
 Vain were the terrors that gathered around him
 And short the dominion of death and the grave;
 He burst from the fetters of darkness that bound him
 Resplendent in glory, to live and to save.
 Loud was the chorus of angels on high,
 'The Saviour hath risen, and man shall not die.'

Glory to God, in full anthems of joy;
 The being he gave us, death cannot destroy.
 Sad were the life we must part with tomorrow,
 If tears were our birthright, and death were our end;
 But Jesus hath cheered the dark valley of sorrow
 And bade us, immortal, to heaven ascend.
 Lift then your voices in triumph on high,
 For Jesus hath risen, and man shall not die.

SECTION XLVIII.

JESUS APPEARS TO HIS DISCIPLES.

LUKE XXIV. 13.

AND behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass that, while they communed together, and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were holden, that they should not know him. And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering, said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people; and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel; and besides all this to-day is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; and when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen

a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. And certain of them which were with us, went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said ; but him they saw not. Then he said unto them, Oh fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. And they drew nigh unto the village whither they went ; and he made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him ; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem ; and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.—And as they thus spake, he himself stood in the midst of them ; and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

REFLECTIONS.

“ Did not our heart burn within us by the way ?” May we not all look back upon hours in our own lives which an-

swer to this description of the disciples' feelings ? There are times when our hearts hold converse with a Being whom they do not comprehend, when a feeling of solemn thought comes over them, and they seem in the presence of something indescribably holy. It was thus with the disciples, as they trod, with their unknown master, the path to Emmaus. It is at such times that the Spirit of God is holding converse with our spirits. Let us not silence its whisperings by permitting the loud voice of the world to make them unheard ; but in solitude, "commune with our own hearts," and with our Maker ; "and be still." We shall find the thoughtlessness of our natures corrected by the exercise. We shall find virtuous principle acquiring strength, and the force of headlong impulse weakened. The things which before were hard to our minds in the dispensations of Providence, will become easy to understand, and doubt will give place to adoring faith and love ; as the sadness and ignorance which hung over the minds of the disciples, gave way as the Saviour instructed them from the Scriptures, in the prophecies relating to himself.

HYMN.

Hath not thy heart within thee burned
 At evening's calm and holy hour,
 As if its inmost depths discerned
 The presence of a loftier power ?

Hast thou not heard, 'mid forest glades,
 While ancient rivers murmured by,
 A voice from forth the eternal shades,
 That spake a present Deity ?

And as, upon the sacred page,
 Thine eye in rapt attention turned
 O'er records of a holier age,
 Hath not thy heart within thee burned ?

It was the voice of God, that spake
 In silence to thy silent heart ;
 And bade each worthier thought awake,
 And every dream of earth depart.

Voice of our God, Oh yet be near !
 In low, sweet accents whisper peace :
 Direct us on our pathway here,
 Then bid in heaven our wanderings cease.



SECTION XLIX.

CHRIST'S CHARGE TO PETER.

JOHN XXI. 1. and 15.

AFTER these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias. And on this wise showed he himself. There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately, and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore ; but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat ? They answered him, No. And he said unto them, cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord.

So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me. Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved, following; (which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?) Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him; If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me.

REFLECTIONS.

“Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?” There was occasion for the question; for Peter, though at first loudest in his professions, had violated them all, by the denial of his master. But may not we apply to ourselves the interrogation

of our Lord? It may be that we too have professed to love him; but alas, our resolutions, like those of the apostle, have failed in the day of temptation. We have denied our Saviour, not once, but often; denied him by turning away, uninterested, from the thoughts of him; denied him by our sins. Let us recall then to our memory the question of Jesus, "Lovest thou me?" May it recur to us in adversity; "Lovest thou me enough to bear as my disciple, without repining, the burthens which Providence ordains for thee? Then shall thy love for me make those burthens light, and bring thee at length to happiness which shall never end." In prosperity may that question be recalled to mind; "Lovest thou me more than these things? Can thy religious affections retain their strength amid so many temptations, so many enjoyments? Be watchful then, and be doubly happy, in the enjoyment of the life that now is, and the anticipated glories of the world to come."

HYMN.

Creator! by thy care and love
 A charge is given us from above;
 In constant duty must we wait,
 As servants at their masters gate;
 Remembering all thy holy law
 With zealous love, and fear, and awe,
 And ready, when our Lord shall come,
 Joyful to bid him welcome home.

Then, in the watches of the night,
 If he appear before our sight,
 Fearless may we his presence meet,¹
 And as our friend, our Master greet;
 His eye our ready love shall see,
 And mark our tried fidelity;
 And kindness from his lips shall flow,
 And large rewards his hands bestow.

Thus, holy Master, in the day
When heaven and earth shall pass away,
When, in the world's astonished sight,
Thy throne of judgment stands in light,
May we, from every terror free,
That awful preparation see ;
And, e'en in Nature's closing hour
Adore our Maker's love and power.



SECTION L.

THE ASCENSION OF JESUS.

Acts I.

THE former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up, after that he had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen through the Holy Ghost. To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. And being assembled together with them, he commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water ; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel ? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in

his own power. But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.

REFLECTIONS.

The Saviour has ascended to his father. The scene of his earthly labours and sufferings has been exchanged for eternal glory in the heavens. But his gospel remains. A light sprung up on the shore of the lake of Galilee, to those who sat in darkness. The nations saw it and were glad; vice and ignorance fled away before it. Europe rejoiced in its radiance. It darted across the waves of the Atlantic, and touched a new world with hues of heaven. Its beams still shine to guide us in the way of peace, to make glad the desolate places of the earth. The Saviour moves no more among men, but the spirit which shone in him, the spirit of devotion to his heavenly Father, and of love to the human race, hath since his day animated thousands of faithful hearts. His kingdom, which commenced in the humble manger at Bethlehem, has been proclaimed far and wide. May that

God from whom he came, extend its limits, till all the world shall own the name of Jesus; and may we, his disciples, by unfeigned love of him and of his heavenly Father, and by living among our fellow men as brethren, join with our hearts and lives in the song of the angels who announced his birth, "Glory to God in the highest; peace on earth; good will toward men."

HYMN.

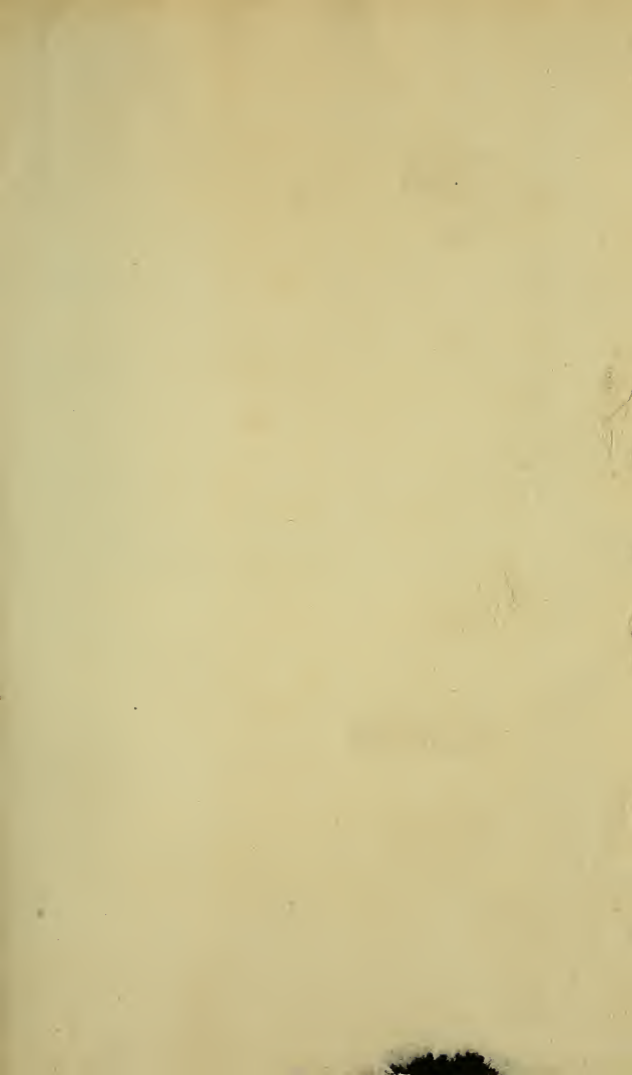
MONTGOMERY*

Hail to the Lord's anointed !
 Great David's greater Son ;
 Hail, in the time appointed,
 His reign on earth begun.
 He comes to break oppression,
 To set the captive free ;
 To take away transgression,
 And rule in equity.

He shall come down, like showers,
 Upon the fruitful earth,
 And love, joy, hope, like flowers,
 Spring in his path to birth :
 Before him, on the mountains,
 Shall Peace the herald go ;
 And righteousness in fountains
 From hill to valley flow.

For him shall prayer unceasing,
 And daily vows, ascend ;
 His kingdom still increasing,
 A kingdom without end.
 The mountain dews shall nourish
 A seed in weakness sown,
 Whose fruit shall spread and flourish,
 And shake like Lebanon.

O'er every foe victorious,
He on his throne shall rest,
From age to age more glorious,
All-blessing and all-blest.
The tide of time shall never
His covenant remove ;
His name shall stand forever ;
That name to us is—Love.



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